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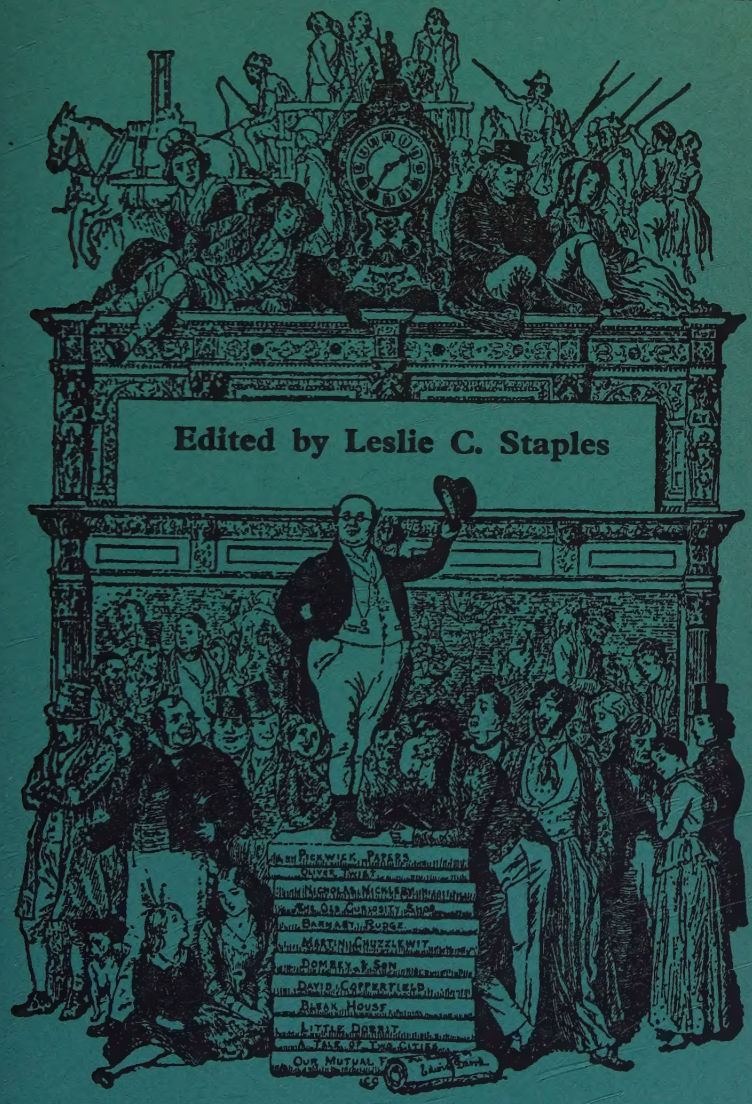

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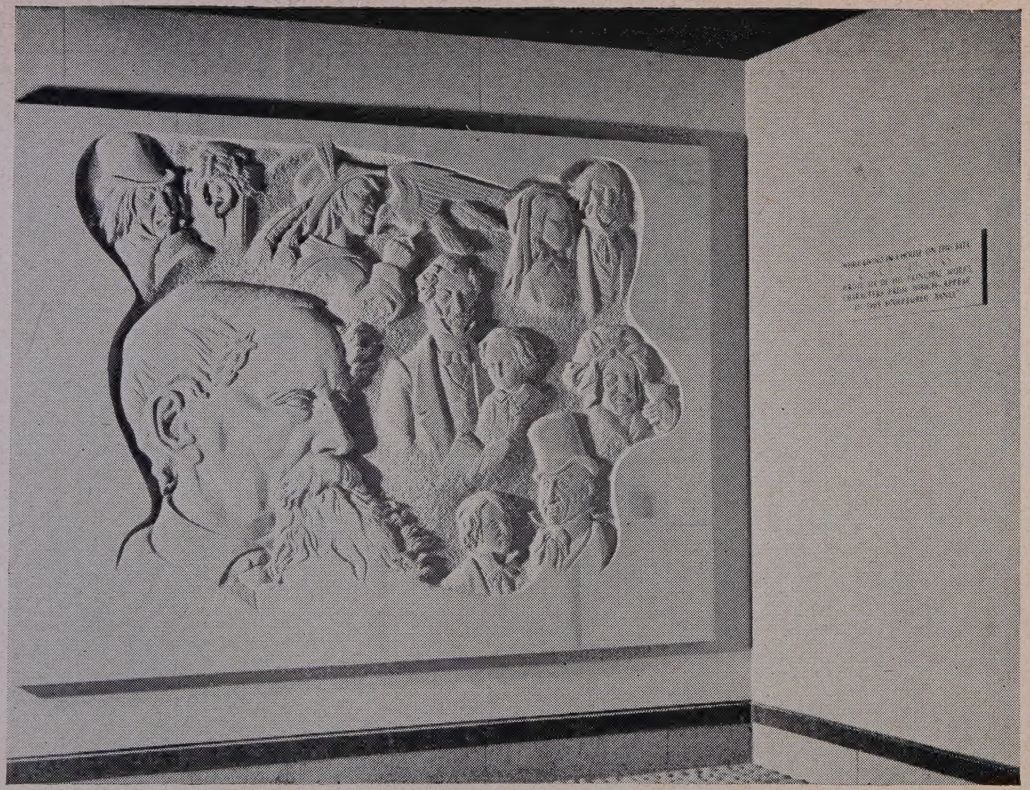

Sculptured panel on the site of
No. 1 Devonshire Terrace

THE DICKENSIAN

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VOL. LVI. SEPTEMBER 1960 No. 332

WHEN FOUND—

The châlet There is excellent news of the appeal for the removal and re-erection of Dickens's châlet in the garden of the museum, Eastgate House, at Rochester, which was reported in our last number. The Isaac Wolfson Foundation, of which our Vice-President, Lord Birkett is a Trustee, has through the good offices of our President, Miss Margaret Lane, contributed £1,000 which will enable the Rochester Corporation to carry out the necessary work. Branches of the Fellowship and other well-wishers are asked by the President not to relax any efforts they may have in mind, in order that the interior may be put in order, and furnished in a manner resembling its appearance in Dicken's day. The Fellowship is deeply grateful to the Wolfson Trust and to everyone concerned, happy in the knowledge that this vitally important memento of the novelist will be rescued from possible decay, adequately cared for, and rendered easily accessible to visitors to Rochester.

* * * * *

Devonshire Terrace Our frontispiece shows the noble sculptured panel which now adorns the large office building which has arisen on the site of Dickens's old home at 1 Devonshire Terrace. This fine memorial which is eleven feet long, is the work of Mr. Estcourt J. Clark, F.R.B.S., is placed in a commanding position in an alcove of the building, facing the Marylebone Road, and shows Dickens surrounded by a group of characters from the various books which he wrote while residing on this site. Dickensians are greatly indebted to Messrs. Laing, the owners and constructors of the property, for this most public spirited action. Alongside, on the site of Dickens's door in Devonshire Terrace, there is another tablet recording his residence, with a quotation of his assurance to Forster that " I seem as if I had plucked myself out of my proper soil when I left Devonshire Terrace; and could take root no more till I return to it."

* * * * *

Doughty Street Something more heartening has occurred at Doughty Street, where not only the Dickens House but the whole thoroughfare has come under a preservation order, and is therefore likely to remain undisturbed as long as the houses hold together. This has resulted to a great extent from the preservation of the Dickens House by the Fellowship.

* * * * *

William Jones, schoolmaster It came as a surprise that Jones's tombstone was still to be seen in Old St. Pancras Churchyard, the scene of Jerry Cruncher's " fishing " expeditions. It was removed from the site of the grave when the railway pierced the graveyard, and stands in a row of others

from which, at our suggestion, the St. Pancras Borough Council are to remove it to a more prominent position and to indicate its Dickensian association. The Fellowship is to assist by undertaking a restoration of the flaking stone. The present deterioration does not extend to the inscription which is clearly legible and records that William Jones was " for many years Master of a respectable School in this Parish, who departed this Life on the 20th day of January, 1836, Aged 59 Years. The inflexible integrity of his Character and the social and domestic Virtues which adorned his private Life will long be Cherished in the recollection of all who knew him." The " respectable school " was, of course, Wellington House Academy, in nearby Hampstead Road, which Dickens attended from 1824 to 1826, which he described in " Our School," and which suggested Creakle's Salem House Academy in *David Copperfield*. The school itself, it is sad to relate, is in a shockingly dilapidated condition. It has been empty for some time and the owners, British Railways, have yet to decide its future. Its appearance prompts the opinion that there can be one way. Meantime the L.C.C. are still considering the erection upon it of a new tablet, recording Dickens's attendance. If, however, the house is restored, the present one, erected by the St. Pancras Branch of the Fellowship, would be perfectly adequate, when cleaned and placed in a lower position.

* * * * *

Another tablet

Another Dickens memorial will appear soon in London. The enterprising West End and Central Stores at 14 Great Russell Street are to mark their premises with a tablet recording the residence there of Charles Kitterbell, as related in " The Bloomsbury Christening " in *Sketches by Boz*.

* * * * *

Bransby Williams

The Fellowship's most cordial greetings went to Bransby Williams on August 14th last, the occasion of his 90th birthday. He celebrated it most happily at home, for not long before he had been in hospital for a throat operation, followed by an injury to a shoulder, the result of a fall. We rejoice to know that he is fully recovered from both.

* * * * *

Announcement

The Editor would like to express his gratitude to Mr. John Greaves, Hon. Secretary to the Fellowship, for readily undertaking to see through the press the two next numbers of *The Dickensian*. The Editor will be out of England from October until the summer following, and, although the bulk of the two numbers will be ready before he goes, there will be much for Mr. Greaves to do in the matter of topical material. However, but for his kindness the Editor could not undertake this lengthy tour, the goal of many years' anticipation. During that time contributions for future numbers will be gladly received at Dickens House and dealt with promptly on the Editor's return.

LESLIE C. STAPLES

GREAT EXPECTATIONS
A HUNDRED YEARS AFTER

By Sylvère Monod

(from a lecture delivered at the
Institut Français du Royaume-Uni in London
on the 23rd February, 1960).

I BELIEVE I have heard it said somewhere that my fellow-countrymen enjoy a reputation for impertinence. Perhaps I ought to say rather that they suffer from such a deleterious imputation. But no—I spoke advisedly. I am afraid they do—we do—really and truly enjoy it. It is not for me to say how far that reputation is deserved, but of one thing I am sure: that of all the many impertinent things that an impertinent Frenchman can do, few can be more so than coming here to-day, as I do, to lecture about Dickens to an English audience . . .

If I have dared to come here this afternoon, in spite of everything, it is because the centenary of *Great Expectations* provided me with an opportunity to talk, not about Dickens in general, but about one novel with which I happen to have a special connection, since I have just published a French translation of it. This means that I have had to re-write every word of it in my own language. And as the novel had been originally written in the first person, the link thus established between the translator and the hero is still closer than in the case of an impersonal narrator. About *Great Expectations*, therefore, I think I could almost say, as Dickens said in his preface to *A Tale of Two Cities*, that:

"I have so far verified what is done and suffered in these pages, as that I have certainly done and suffered it all myself." And this gives me the necessary modicum of self-confidence to appear to-day before you unblushingly. Perhaps I ought to speak at greater length about the throes and joys of translating a book like *Great Expectations*, but for the time being the point I want to make is merely that I find I have something to say about *Great Expectations*, which is not necessarily more interesting than, but at any rate different from, the experience of any English reader.

Well, the first thing I have to say is that, after re-reading the book scores of times, and spending numberless hours in close touch with it, grappling with its text, I find it still very much alive and, in spite of its advanced age, as Boz might have put it, "still going strong".

* * * * *

The novel, then, was published in *All the Year Round* between December 1860 and August of the following year; and immediately after that, of course, in book form, still with the same tremendous success. The question to which I would like now to draw your attention is simply this: why are we to regard this old book as important to all of us, nowadays, a hundred years after? There will be no time to go into the critical history of that novel through the past century; we must content ourselves with looking critically at its present status, at its significance for the reader of 1960.

Its importance springs, both from some of the things it still has to say—and from the way in which it says those things, I mean from the art with which it says them. And on both counts it will be found to be at once extremely characteristic of Dickens and yet rather different from all the other Dickens novels. When the late André Gide wrote of Dickens: "il me paraît s'être surpassé dans *Great Expectations*" (he seems to me to have surpassed himself in *Great Expectations*), the phrase was particularly felicitous and should be taken seriously, that is, literally. In *Great Expectations* Dickens did surpass *himself*; his achievement in it is outstanding, it goes beyond what he has done before in many ways; but it was *himself* still that he surpassed, and it was along the very same lines that he now travelled farther; he surpassed himself, then, and it was also by himself that he was surpassed, in the sense that he was still fully, characteristically and triumphantly himself when he did so.

This twofold aspect of *Great Expectations* could best be shown, I think, by comparing, on a number of chosen points, passages, episodes, or characters out of the book, with similar, but not identical, passages, characters or episodes out of the earlier novels. In the limited time at my disposal, however, I shall often have to ask you to take the will for the deed and merely refer to some well-known chapters of those other books.

One point is definitely not to be illustrated by the method of comparative quotation, and that is the structure, or composition of a novel. Yet it is important, too, in the case of *Great Expectations* and has to be mentioned. Dickens has too often been called careless in the building-up of his plots; and it is true that *Pickwick* and *Nickleby*, at any rate, are practically plotless. Sometimes, for a change, as it were, Dickens finds himself charged with treating his plots, not with too little, but with too much care; and again, it is true that, in *Oliver Twist* or *Barnaby Rudge*, "the plot thickens" so much that in the end it is definitely laid on too thick. True also that in *Our Mutual Friend* there are just a shade too many corpses, semi-corpses, pseudo-corpses and temporary corpses. It is all too neat and orderly and unlike real life . . . or real death, as often as not. But in *Great Expectations* there is neither any lack nor any excess of artistic control over the events or of a harmonious ordering of them; the dose is just right; the author has never allowed himself to "meander", as the old lady is reported to have said in the first chapter of *Copperfield*. (I am referring to the lady who "to the last, expressed her indignation at the impiety of mariners and others who had the presumption to go 'meandering' about the world"; after which Dickens adds: "Not to meander myself, at present, I will go back to my birth.") There are only two noticeable exceptions; one is the *Hamlet* chapter which is as nearly gratuitous as anything can be in such a close-knit story; nearly but not quite, since Magwitch's sworn foe lurks and glowers in the immediate background of this uproariously funny skit on poor acting. The other exception is the end of the novel, or rather the way in which Dickens substituted at—or after—the last minute a tolerable happy ending and the prospect of Pip's marriage with widowed Estella for his earlier sombre vision of a solitary

future for his hero. Apart from these, and the knack that both Pumblechook, Pip's uncle, and Jaggers, his guardian—have of occasionally getting out of hand, the former because he infuriates both Pip and Dickens, the latter because he awes them, the novel as a whole is conducted with extreme skill and kept under constant control.

Not, of course, that that is a superiority in itself over the more meandering early novels. The meandering in *Copperfield* is truly delightful, and of *Pickwick* it might be contended that the book is held together by the sheer force—or weakness—of leisurely meandering. But while *Pickwick* is thus a stupendous achievement in meandering, the inference is merely that Dickens's purpose in *Great Expectations* was something radically different; *Great Expectations* may be less of a *given* thing than *Pickwick*, more of a *made* thing. It is also, by any standards, the work of a better craftsman.

I would like now to show more precisely what the difference consists in, on a number of other points.

If we proceed to examine the events and incidents that make up the story, of course we shall find a good many sensational elements. After all, escaped convicts like Magwitch, lunatics like Miss Havisham, murderous primitives like Old Orlick, Joe's journeyman, are fortunately not the stuff our daily lives are made of; but one ought to consider Dickens's purpose, which was not to produce here a mere romance of real life, but much rather to attain to a higher, more poetical kind of truth, in which unusual, fantastic or gruesome circumstances and persons are there, it would seem, to keep the drabness of daily life away, while they by no means preclude a careful and accurate picture and analysis of what remains central, and indeed essential: the growth of Pip's personality. Pip, no doubt, is tried by means of baroque touchstones. But when to the magic of style is added that of both emotion and humour of the most telling kind, the necessary willing suspension of disbelief is secured, and what does it matter that the trials should be at times far-fetched, since, when he has been thus tried, Pip is found true, amazingly true, in fact, and so close to us ?

There are many moving pages in *Great Expectations*, as in most of Dickens's novels. Even *Pickwick* had its pathos in such places as the meeting with Jingle in the Fleet, or in the general treatment of the relationship between Sam and his master. Pathos of a more questionable kind, again and again bordering on bathos, was later to become one of Dickens's least palatable specialities, with the Little Nells, Little Pauls, Little Em'lys, Little Dorrits, until the mere appearance of the word *little* in a Dickens novel gives pause to the modern reader, who would seem to have less of an appetite for sentimentality than his Victorian forbears. But the pathos of *Great Expectations* is mostly of a diffuse, all-pervading kind. It is truly the story of Pip, of his mistakes and his blundering progress, that is pathetic from beginning to end, even when it is funny on the surface of it.

The fun is perhaps less of an obstacle to our perception and enjoyment of the pathos than are the occasional touches of

melodrama. Of the long-concealed identity of Pip's patron, Chesterton wrote, in one of his dazzling phrases: " The secrecy is sensational, the secret is tame " (a phrase, by the way, that sounds like a challenge to a French translator's wiles). But is this more than a phrase ? Isn't it dazzling to the point of making us blind to the truth ? Isn't the truth that the sensational melodrama woven by Dickens round this secret identity matters neither more nor less than the secret itself, is neither tamer, nor wilder, than the secret ? Both the secrecy and the secret matter only in so far as they contribute to mould Pip's personality. Otherwise the book never could be re-read with enjoyment. Besides, the melodramatic element in *Great Expectations* is at any rate less gruesome than in, say, either *Barnaby Rudge* or *Our Mutual Friend*, where characters get mistaken for dead men, and murdered men at that. And, as was said before, the very weirdness of the invention has its use in that it procures for Pip an unusual form of trial.

The question of the fun is of course somewhat different. Some modern minds and, at least in my country, many older ones, hold or have held, that a book with such a wealth of meaning should not aim at amusing the reader on the way to the great truths it has set out to disclose to him, that no book can play such a double game and win on both counts. It will be said that comedy is diverting also in the sense that it diverts the readers' attention from the essential implications of a story. That may be true in the abstract; but it was certainly not Dickens's view, nor did it inspire his practice or that of even the most serious novelist of his time or ours. Even the seriousness of purpose that is nowadays so imperiously demanded of the novelist by certain critical schools cannot well keep out of fiction one whole side of life. Probably Dickens had more seriousness of purpose when he wrote *Great Expectations*—as I hope to show before I conclude this talk—than ever before, but his purpose was to picture life as it appeared to him, in its entirety, somewhat coloured, no doubt, by his poetical imaginings, but not bereft of half its truth. And to him, the truth was that life, however earnest, or even austere, one's attitude to it, has its comic side, so often inextricably mixed up with the serious

There is more humour, there is more fun, in *Great Expectations* than in any of the novels that had come just before it: *A Tale of Two Cities*, or *Little Dorrit*, or *Hard Times*, or perhaps even *Bleak House*. To quote only a few examples, there is Trabb's boy, with his Sam Weller-like cheek or *aplomb* and the efficient manner in which with inexhaustible resourcefulness (Pip calls him that " unlimited miscreant ") he castigates the hero for having proudly cut him (ch. XXX). And there is, of course, the famous *Hamlet* scene, in which the former parish clerk of Pip's village, having become an actor under the name of Waldengarver, goes through a performance of Shakespeare's tragedy, not without some little hindrances and other difficulties (ch. XXXI). All this, and much more of the same sort, is real, pure Dickens, enough to reassure his friends and delight his public. He had not lost the old power, he had even recovered a surprising degree of freshness in the way he could wield it at pleasure. Joe's visit to Miss Havisham's, or

Joe's other visit, to Pip and his friend Herbert Pocket in their lodgings in London, are first rate examples of that most important form of Dickensian humour that relies significantly on the perception of incongruity. And they are at least as wonderful as anything that had come before in the same field, like Mr. Pickwick's arrival among the prisoners at the Fleet, for instance.

* * * * *

Both the humour of *Great Expectations* and its characterisation, though they make the book unquestionably worth reading, would fail to prove that it is more worth reading than nearly every other Dickens novel, especially in this centenary year. To prove this, and thus show that the centenary of *Great Expectations* is an event that matters greatly to all of us, I must now turn to the two points I have not yet examined, the psychology of Pip himself and the social and moral purport of the book.

For, if a line is to be drawn sharply between psychology and characterisation in the novel, surely this line will divide Pip on the one hand from the rest of the characters on the other. Some critics—few in number, I am glad to report—have indeed complained that Pip—like David Copperfield, they will say— is but a dim or shadowy figure. On coming across that kind of criticism, one's first reaction, if one knows both Pip and David as intimately as a translator is bound to do, is to register an indignant protest. But it is more profitable to try and find out how such criticism can come to be written. It is fairly easy, and not unrewarding, to do so. For this impression of shadowiness undoubtedly comes from the contrast between David or Pip and the people around them; they are of course less definite, less clear-cut, and also less simple, than Micawber or Pumblechook, than Uriah or Wemmick, than Miss Mowcher or Miss Havisham. But if David and Pip do not stand out in such vivid colours, is it not precisely because they are seen and painted and perceived from the inside? In other words, isn't the difference between the common run of Dickens characters—uncommon enough, in any case!—and Pip or David the difference that also exists between our perception of the people around us and what perception we have of our own selves?

The very use of the autobiographical narrative form precludes the customary external method of characterisation for the central figure. It makes for a deeper, altogether more searching approach to the complete psychological truth of and about one human being.

It would be too long to refer in detail to all the evidence of psychological subtlety in *Great Expectations*, and indeed it is for each individual reader and "re-reader" of the book to discover its wealth of observation and accuracy of analysis as expressed in, by, and through the character of Pip and his slow progress. Still, we can at least mention some of the more prominent aspects of this successful exploration: there is, in the first place no doubt, the astounding veracity with which Dickens, when he was nearly fifty, could still paint the child's mind and soul. It has sometimes been suggested that Dickens's major handicap as an artist was no other than the remote consequence of the emotional shock that

had occurred in his own boyhood, when he had become a factory worker at the age of twelve; it had arrested the normal course of his psychological growth and development; parts of his mind and personality had as it were aged prematurely or become adult at one blow; others had lagged behind, mostly in the emotional field, never to overtake the rest. But what could be in some ways a handicap became a source of unique strength also, whenever an understanding of childhood was concerned. The bond created by this painful incident between Dickens and the magic dreamland of childhood could not be broken so long as this childish streak remained alive in him. And alive it did remain to the end. Hence so many wonderful chapters in *Great Expectations*, such as Chapter IX in which Pip tells the most fantastic tales about his first visit to Miss Havisham's and Dickens makes it clear that the lies do not originate in any desire on his part to be deceitful, but in the fear of being misunderstood, a fear engendered, understandably enough, by the unkind bullying of those around him, by their complete lack of tenderness. It is in *Martin Chuzzlewit* that a sympathetic butcher utters the memorable pronouncement that " Meat must be humoured, not drove ". Surely what is true of meat is still truer of children, and, as Kipling in his turn was to make clear again and again, a child that is " drove " instead of being " humoured " will tell lies.

As far as childhood is concerned, another point ought to be mentioned: it has sometimes been thought strange that the action of *Great Expectations* should be placed, not in the England of the early sixties, but in the England of the early twenties. Yet nothing is more natural than that, while projecting himself into the past and thus recapturing his child's vision of the world. Dickens should have seen the world of his own childhood. Not even Dickens could trust himself to describe the world of his manhood as seen by a child. Who among us has a clear idea of how our own children see our adult world ? The choice of the period, therefore, is not an unlucky accident; it is a vital element of the truth.

But, indeed, the period matters comparatively little; for the truth ultimately reached about children is not of one time, but of all times, just as it will be enjoyed at all times of life.

Other psychological assets of *Great Expectations* are the treatment of friendship and the treatment of love in that story. Curiously enough, when one bears in mind Dickens's own unusual capacity for friendship, there are few convincing pairs of friends in his novels: Oliver Twist had been friendless, as were most of the heroes; David had been almost a solitary exception with his solid life-long attachment to Traddles; as to Steerforth, there is a passionate, quasi-amorous feeling in the part of David; but it is ambiguously returned at best. Whereas friendship seems to hold as important a place in Pip's outlook as it undoubtedly did in Dickens's own: Joe, Herbert Pocket, Wemmick, and even, in the end, Magwitch, all are studies in various significant aspects of friendship.

The case of love is even clearer. When we remember the dreary unreality of the love-making in the early novels (of which the best

example—that is, the worst—is probably provided by the totally unconvincing and uninteresting pair, Rose and Harry Maylie in *Oliver Twist*, but the list of similar dull failures is a painfully long one), when we remember all that, Estella, cold as she is, unnatural as is the general conception of her chaarcter, appears as almost miraculously true and lively; and, at any rate, the love felt by Pip for her is unspeakably remote from the sugary insignificance of Dickens's earlier attempts in the same direction; it is no longer unmitigated bliss; it is not bliss at all, in fact; it is something that hurts deeply; it is something that Pip has to struggle against. And it is profoundly true. It is almost the first example of adult love-making in Dickens's writings. Whether Ellen Lawless Ternan's influence had anything to do with this awakening of the Dickens novel to the deeper realities of passion, it is not for me to decide—any more than I can tell whether the same young lady had anything to do with the greater convincingness of the later love-stories, that of Bella Wilfer in *Our Mutual Friend*, or again that of Rosa Budd in *Edwin Drood*.

Finally, much of the significance of *Great Expectations* to-day comes from the moral and social purport of the book. Here again, the extraordinary wealth of its implications and suggestions in those fields, will be best appreciated by each individual reader when he has discovered them for himself, when they have thus become part of his moral experience; and the force of those revelations and confirmations will be increased after each fresh contact with the book. I for one am warned by repeated past experience—and by experience in the very recent past—against regarding any of my own findings as final, or the list as closed. Besides, such discoveries are intensely personal matters, so that they can hardly be shared, least of all publicly. And the different findings of different readers need not be mutually exclusive; the moral truth in *Great Expectations* is manifold, and can be apprehended in any number of fragmentary ways. I can do no more therefore, than mention one of the most significant directions in which I at present think this truth is to be looked for. I tend to see in *Great Expectations*, in so far as social and moral criticism is at stake, above all a passionate denunciation of the false values on which the Victorian ideals of gentlemanliness rested: humbug—that lifelong bugbear of Dickens—smugness, and all the snobberies entailed by an exclusive regard for, or even worship of, money and its consequences in the form of rank, are all tirelessly and relentlessly exposed.

Now, this, if it were all, even expressed with exceptional vigour, the vigour of strong personal conviction, would be most unoriginal, and it would not justify the claim I am trying to make. Perhaps both Carlyle and Ruskin, among others, were preaching the same creed with greater moral elevation and greater efficacy. But I think this is not all. For indeed, thanks to the autobiographical form, Dickens can picture the groping quest of Pip for the truth, not only about the world and the society among which he lives, but also, and more importantly, about himself. Thus he will perceive his own deficiencies, and such perceptions will be as many steps in his spiritual progress. Sometimes he will not be aware

of them, but will disclose them to us unwillingly, as it were, or at any rate unwittingly, and they will be all the more significant to us on that account.

Thus does Dickens make it abundantly clear that the worst and most insidious kind of smugness may lie in the complacent, Pharisaical, condemnation of other people's smugness. Pip, even while he lays bare the humbug of Pumblechook, or the sycophantic greed of Miss Havisham's relatives, or the snobbery of his comrade Drummle, is a pitiful little snob himself. The word *snob* is not used once by Dickens in *Great Expectations*, yet a considerable proportion of the book consists of infinite and subtle variations on this theme of snobbery. One thing is rather explicitly brought to light; it is that Pip will never be a man before he has ceased to wish to become merely a gentleman, before he has discarded all his spurious ambitions. This is already of the utmost significance, and it is beautifully conveyed. But I think the implications of Pip's moral adventure are much more far-reaching than that. And what makes the book so exceedingly valuable even to-day, a hundred years after, is perhaps above all the effect it must inevitably produce on us, the suggestion that it will never do to lay the whole blame on the Victorians; such a comfortable attitude would be a hindrance, not a help, on the way to truth and moral progress. *Great Expectations* invites us to turn our ruthless glance on to ourselves, and to see that there is smugness, that there is humbug, that there is Victorianism of a kind, that there is this yearning for pseudo-gentility and this unslakable thirst for money, not in the Victorians merely, but in man in general, in the men of all times, in the men of the present day, in us.

And then, in the same way as Pip emerges out of his ordeal with clearer perceptions, we can emerge out of the reading and re-reading of *Great Expectations* with a better understanding of some vital truths. *Great Expectations* is probably Dickens's most fully adult novel, staging as it does in Pip an adult in the making; why not let the book help make adults of all its readers? Then would the title of the novel, unquestionably far and away the richest, most beautiful, most pathetic of the whole fifteen coined by Dickens, assume an ever fresh significance. Pip's expectations were as deceptive as they were, not great, but contemptibly little; so were Miss Havisham's, or Magwitch's. But our own expectations on opening the book, for the first or the hundredth time, cannot be disappointed, whether we go to it for amusement, or for emotion, or for what alone can make expectations truly great: the truth.

CONGRATULATIONS

Our warm greetings to Mrs. Nelly Cruttenden, the founder of the Wellington, N.Z., Branch, who celebrated her 90th birthday in June. Mrs. Cruttenden was present at the founding of the Fellowship in London in 1902, going later to Melbourne and ultimately to Wellington. Long may she continue to enjoy the admiration of her colleagues which she has so richly deserved.

THE STRANGE STORY OF THOMAS MITTON

By William J. Carlton

THE distinction of being Dickens's oldest friend has been accorded to his fellow journalist Thomas Beard, whose intimacy with the novelist extended over some forty years. A strong claim to have been an even earlier friend might be made for Thomas Mitton, who enjoyed his confidence over an almost equally long period. The son of Thomas and Mary Mitton, he was born at Great Saffron Hill on October 11th, 1812, and baptised at St. Andrew's, Holborn, on the following December 29th. A sister, Mary Ann Mitton, was baptized in the same church on October 11th, 1815, her parents' address being given in the parish register as Battle Bridge and her father's occupation as " publican." The rate books of St. Andrew's show that they were living in that parish from 1808 to 1814, and the move to Battle Bridge must have taken place soon afterwards. The publican may have been the " Thos. Mitan " whose address was given in 1830 as The Polygon, Battle Bridge.[1]

It will be remembered that from June, 1824, to 1829 or thereabouts Dickens was living with his parents at 29 Johnson Street, Somers Town (the number was changed to 13 in 1825), with a break of nine or ten months at the near-by Polygon, and it was presumably about that time that the two families became acquainted. Mitton's sister claimed to have lived as a little girl directly opposite 13 Johnson Street, " She remembered that the Dickens family had taken the entire No. 13, and many an early morning excursion with Charles she recollected in the summers between 1824 and 1829."[2] No confirmation has been found of Forster's statement that it was Mitton's connection with a school kept by a Mr. Dawson in Hunter Street, Brunswick Square, where Dickens's brothers were subsequently placed, which led to their early friendship. However that may be, it is certain that the elder Mitton was living in Charles Street, Somers Town, which ran westwards from Phoenix Street by the Polygon, on March 13th 1828 when he articled his son for five years to Charles Molloy, a solicitor of 6 Symonds Inn, Chancery Lane.[3] Soon after leaving the service of Ellis & Blackmore in November, 1828, Dickens was employed for a short time in Molloy's office which had meanwhile been transferred to 8 New Square, Lincoln's Inn.[4] There he must have met the articled clerk if he had not already done so.

If we may rely on the recollections of Mitton's sister, as recorded by a newspaper reporter when she was a very old lady of 95, her family had been farmers at Sunbury, but on account of her mother's illness much of her youth was spent under the care of a

[1] *Clayton's Court Guide to the Environs of London*, corrected for January, 1830, p. 4. There are several references in Dickens's works to Battle Bridge, the old name for the district now known as King's Cross which commemorated the scene of a battle between Britons and Romans. The little sweep of Dickens's early days settled in the neighbourhood (" A Little Talk about the Spring and the Sweeps," *Library of Fiction*, June, 1836), and the redoubtable burglar Conkey Chickweed " kept a public house over Battlebridge way " with a cellar where a good many young lords went to see " cock-fighting and badger -drawing and that " (*Oliver Twist*, chap. 31).

[2] J. Brett Langstaff, *David Copperfield's Library*, 1924, p. 33.

[3] P.R.O., C.P.5, 235/21.

[4] *The Dickensian*, xlviii, 166-7 (September 1952).

nurse at Somers Town. Here she became Dickens's friend and playmate and he called her "Little Dorrit," persuading her to miss the Sunday afternoon service at St. Pancras Church for the more attractive purpose of visiting places of interest in the city. "He would always foreshadow some alluring treat in the way

Mrs. Mary Ann Cooper (*née* Mitton)

of a visit to the Tower, fun with the beadles, or adventures in the parks," she is reported to have said.[1] Another version places the Mittons' home at Manor Farm, Sunbury, where Mary Ann is said to have met her husband. It may yet transpire that this was, as has been suggested, the original Manor Farm of Dingley Dell in Pickwick.[2] She told her interviewers of the days when Dickens used to visit her home in Sunbury for rest and recuperation. After

[1] *Evening Times*, 26th Nov. 1910, quoted by Edwin Pugh, *The Charles Dickens Originals*, 1912, p. 161.
[2] *The Dickensian*, lii, 163 (Sept. 1956).

hard work in the gallery of the House of Commons or long hours of study in the chambers he shared with her brother, he would rush off each Saturday for the Sunbury coach and spend the week-end in bird-nesting, egg-stealing, rabbit-hunting, fishing, tramps over the fields, and story-telling round the fireside. " He used to bring his manuscripts to my brother and myself, and read them aloud."[1] One day, he told her, he would write a book and call it " Little Dorrit," after her.[2]

Although there are some inconsistencies in the old lady's story and it is not clear how long a period it covers, the accuracy of some of her statements is confirmed where they can be checked, and allowance must be made for the failing memory of a non-agenarian as well as for possible embroidering by the reporter.

Ample proof that the friendship between the two young men ripened and became closer from about 1833 onwards is furnished by such documentary evidence as is available. At the private theatricals staged by Dickens in Bentinck Street on April 27th, 1833, the name Milton—surely a misprint for Mitton—appeared on the playbill in the rôle of Nicolo in *Clari*. In Easter of that year Mitton was admitted a solicitor of the King's Bench, Westminster, and from 1834 to 1837 he was practising at 3 New Inn, Strand. We find Dickens writing to him in the spring of 1834, apparently about some negotiations he was conducting with Molloy for the purchase of a house in Holywell Street on behalf of a Mrs. Moore;[3] on one occasion begging him to advance " what you can possibly spare " as he was " most desperately hard up;" and on another asking for the loan of " the enormous sum of 4/-."[4] Mitton's advice was sought in the following November when Dickens's feckless father was arrested for debt and held in a sponging house,[5] and soon afterwards the expenses consequent on the removal of the family to Bentinck Street resulted in a request for the loan of £5.[6] Not long after his engagement to Catherine Hogarth, Dickens wrote to her that he had sounded Mitton about their affairs, " and he seems to have arrived at the conclusion that whatever I do must be right and that whoever I love must be faultless."[7]

On any matter of business in which Mitton's knowledge of the law might be of service he was consulted by Dickens—the notice to quit his chambers in Furnival's Inn; his father's financial troubles; his agreements with the publishers Macrone, Chapman & Hall, and Bentley; questions of insurance and the drafting of his will (of which Mitton was to have been a joint executor with Forster)—" and so pray God that you may be gray, and Forster bald, long before you are called upon to act as my executors."[8] Mitton became, in short, his friend's trusted legal adviser and business manager. Even when negotiating for the purchase of a horse in October, 1838, it was to Mitton that Dickens turned to choose one of three offered to him. In that year the solicitor had

1 *Daily News*, 31st March, 1906.
2 *Ibid.*, 7th December, 1906.
3 *Letters of Charles Dickens* (Nonesuch ed.), I, 29-32
4 *Ibid.*, I, 33.
5 *Ibid.*, I, 33-34.
6 *Ibid.*, I, 35-36.
7 *Mr. and Mrs. Charles Dickens*, ed. W. Dexter, 1935, pp. 10-11.
8 *Letters* (Nonesuch ed.), I, 176.

joined the firm of Smithson & Dunn, which became Smithson, Dunn & Mitton, and a little later Smithson & Mitton. Charles Smithson, the senior partner, had been in practice at 6 New Inn, Strand, since 1828, and at 23 Southampton Buildings from 1834. He was to become another congenial member of the Dickens family circle, doubtless through Mitton's association with him. An undated letter from Dickens to Mitton belonging to this period invited him to come and partake of Smithson's turkey and concluded: " You are a pretty fellow . . . What do you mean by trying to get married ' unbeknown ' to your friends ?"[1]

A long letter from Dickens, written at Exeter on March 6th, 1839, gave him a detailed description of the cottage he had just taken at Alphington for his parents; and in the negotiations for the purchase of 1 Devonshire Terrace towards the close of the same year Mitton was again consulted. About this time he seems to have gone to live at Feltham, Middlesex, and soon afterwards to Sipson, where he is found from 1838 to 1841. In the summer of 1840 a dispute about financial matters arose between Mitton and Charles Smithson, from which it appears that the former was then receiving £600 quarterly as well as a share of the profits of the firm. In this case the rôles were reversed and Dickens gave his friend some advice as to his course of action, in spite of which the quarrel led to a dissolution of the partnership in the following year.[2] Before this, however, on Dickens's instructions, Mitton and Smithson had drawn up a notice headed " Caution," notifying all concerned that the novelist would not accept liability for debts incurred in his name by anyone but his wife and himself. This warning, extorted from him by his father's easy-going prodigality, was dated 8th March, 1841, and appeared in *The Examiner* and other papers.[3]

The earlier letters to Mitton were addressed " Dear Tom " or " My Dear Tom." After 1839 they began " My Dear Mitton," but there seems to have been no diminution in the cordial relations between the two men. The solicitor was a welcome guest at Twickenham and Devonshire Terrace, and was invited to spend a month with Dickens and his family at Broadstairs in September, 1840.[4] From 1842 to 1844 Mitton was practising alone at Isleworth. To his profession as a solicitor, which seems to have brought him a large *clientèle* among market gardeners, he had apparently added the occupation of market gardening. As early as September, 1841, Dickens had acknowledged the receipt from him of some fruit " in great perfection," at the same time confiding to him his resolve to go to America.[5] From Liverpool, on January 3rd, 1842, Dickens sent him an account of the accommodation reserved for his wife and himself on board the Britannia; and from Boston on the last day of that month a graphic description of the voyage— " the worst, the officers all concur in saying, that they have ever known "—and of his tumultuous reception in that city.[6] These letters were signed respectively " Your old and faithful friend "

[1] *Letters*, I, 95.
[2] *Ibid.*, I, 261-2.
[3] The full text was printed by Percy H. Fitzgerald in his *Life of Charles Dickens*, 1905, I, 73-4.
[4] *Letters*, I, 266.
[5] *Ibid.*, I, 354-5.
[6] *Ibid.*, I, 371.

and " Always your faithful friend." Another long epistle from Baltimore, dated 22nd March, and one from Cincinnati on 4th April, gave further news of his experiences in America. In this last, Dickens was at some pains to remove a misapprehension caused by a passage in an earlier letter to " my old and familiar friend, in whom I repose so much and such implicit confidence."[1]

Mitton's father, who had apparently been living with him, died at Isleworth on July 22nd, 1842, an event which brought a letter of sympathy from Dickens. " It is a real happiness," he wrote, " to know that for many years past he has lived respectably and happily, which he never could have done but for your arrangements and care . . . Remember me with all the kindness possible to your mother and sister, and believe me in this trouble as in all others and at all times, faithfully your friend."[2] To Charles Smithson, Dickens wrote on 10th May, 1843: " Mr. Mitton has married his only friend, the old charwoman he employed when you first left Southampton Buildings."[3] But as the census of 1851 shows that Mitton was then a bachelor, living at Lampton with a housekeeper, Elizabeth Cooper, " unmarried, aged 36," it must be assumed that this was just another playful dig on the part of the novelist. Lampton is a small hamlet near Osterley Park on the borders of Hounslow and Heston. In 1845 the solicitor occupied two adjoining villas, North and South Lodge, in the Lampton Road, where he was to remain for more than thirty years. In 1844-46 he was practising as Mitton & Nealor, in 1846-50 as Mitton, Scott & Edwards, but after 1850 he was again alone. He seems to have given up the address at Southampton Buildings about this time.

Meanwhile his sister Mary Ann had married John Cartwright Cooper, a market gardener and horticulturist, on September 4th, 1843, at St. James's, Piccadilly. The address of both bride and bridegroom was given in the register as Bury Street, Westminster. Not long after their marriage they are found at Southgate, where they rented the gardens and lived in the lodge of Mayfield School for Ladies, conducted by Miss Lowe. It is said that the ladies who conducted the school took exception to the inordinate love of dress which was a characteristic of Mrs. Cooper until near the end of her long life.[4] She saw nothing incongruous in wearing at the age of 80 a dress appropriate for a young woman of 25. They left the lodge for a house on The Chase and afterwards built a cottage in Avenue Road which they named " Passiflora Villa," cultivating strawberries with such success that Mary Ann became known to her neighbours as Mrs. Strawberry Cooper. She usually accompanied her husband when he went to Covent Garden to market the fruit. Many stories were told of her eccentricities, one being to the effect that her love of finery led her to trim her Sunday gown with tinkling bells, which so distracted the attention of the congregation that she had to be asked politely to desist from wearing them in church.[5]

1 *Letters*, I, 429.
2 *Ibid.*, I, 467.
3 *Ibid.*, I, 520. Thomas Mitton, printer, who married Mary Pickup at Middleton, Lancs., on 12th March, 1843, was a son of James Mitton, and unable to sign his name.
4 *The Sentinel*, 25th April, 1913, p.3.
5 *Barnet Press*, 26th April, 1913, p.3.

After her husband's death, Mrs. Cooper lived a rather lonely life, but when over 80 she took part in a *tableau vivant* entertainment in the village hall, in aid of a charity, as " Princess Passiflora " and sang a song appropriate to the character.[1] She was living at 6 Chelmsford Road, Southgate, when she made her will on May 10th, 1906, and on 6th December of that year opened a sale of work at the Boy's Training Home, Copenhagen Street, Islington. " A more winning old lady it is not possible to imagine," wrote one onlooker, " than this alert, pleasant, prettily attired, white-haired, ancient dame who was 94 years old last March."[2] On April 21st, 1913 Mrs. Mary Ann Cooper, widow, of Ivy Cottage, High Street, Southgate, died in her 99th year. Her effects were valued at £197. 2*s*., among other small bequests being two pictures of strawberries for Thomas Wild of Sipson. Although she usually overstated her age and her memory may have betrayed her in other respects, the statements attributed to her in numerous interviews with newspaper reporters cannot be lightly dismissed as inventions and are the only authority for some episodes of her childhood and youth.

On April 5th, 1844, Mitton attended the funeral of his former partner Charles Smithson, at Old Malton Abbey, Yorkshire, among the other mourners present being Mrs. Smithson's brother T. J. Thompson, Charles Dickens, his sister Fanny and his brother Alfred. Less than a fortnight later Dickens wrote asking him for a loan of £100 to help him out of " a most uncomfortable corner " due to his father's debts, two quarters income tax, etc., coming all at once.[3]

The first intimation of a rift in the close intimacy between the two men is found in a letter from Dickens of May 31st, 1844. " Any words but words of kindness between such old friends as you and me occasion me unaffected pain," he wrote. " If you know of anything in which my heart has changed for the colder or the worse with the change in my fortune I do not."[4] Whatever coolness may have developed did not prevent him from leaving Mitton in charge of the arrangements for letting the house in Devonshire Terrace when he set out with his family for Italy in July, at the same time handing over to the solicitor some of his possessions, which he had taken the precaution of locking up in boxes, to be kept out of the way of the new tenants. One of these boxes contained, Georgina Hogarth remembered, a lady's writing case in which were a lock of Mary Hogarth's hair, the bill for her funeral, and a pen-wiper which had belonged to her, as well as Dickens's early diaries and " quantities of letters " addressed to him from the time of his very early youth up to 1844.[5] For some unexplained reason this box remained in Mitton's possession until his death.

From Genoa, Dickens reported to Mitton on November 5th that he had " written a tremendous book and knocked the *Carol* out of the field."[6] This was *The Chimes*. He would be coming to

[1] *Daily News*, 7th Dec., 1906, p. 5.
[2] *Ibid.*
[3] *Letters*, I, 594.
[4] *Ibid.*, I, 605
[5] Copy of transcript by Walter Dexter, now in the Dickens House, of MS. by Georgina Hogarth, 1883, transcribed by Mrs. G. W. Robinson (*née* Ellen Ternan).
[6] *Letters.*, I, 633.

London to see the proofs but declined Mitton's invitation to stay with him because his visit would be "one of business and consultation." In the following February he gave Mitton his impressions of Rome and Naples and a lively account of the ascent of Vesuvius, in which he was accompanied by Mrs. Dickens and Georgina with six saddle-horses, an armed soldier for guard, and 22 guides.[1] Writing from Genoa again on April 14th he outlined his plans, discussed his accounts with Chapman & Hall and Bradbury & Evans, and gave detailed instructions to Mitton for the redecoration of 1 Devonshire Terrace in readiness for his return in June.[2] These were supplemented in another letter of 20th May.[3]

Mitton was among the first to whom Dickens revealed his plans for starting a daily newspaper as early as October 20th, 1845. "The venture is quite decided on," he wrote "and I have made the plunge."

A letter from Lausanne on August 30th, 1846, dealing mainly with business matters and describing as "a solemn bargain" a proposal he had made for Mitton to visit him in Paris, implies that Dickens had authorised the solicitor to open letters addressed to him in his absence.[4] Mitton's movements about this time must have been uncertain, for in announcing his return from Broadstairs to London at the end of September, 1847, Dickens asked "Where shall you be, when we return? In the wilds of Middlesex?"[5] And in December of that year he gave as one reason for not having written sooner that he had not the faintest idea of "the name of your place." Although there was further business correspondence and Dickens did not fail to inform Mitton of his wife's illness and the death of his father and little child Dora in 1851, the old interchange of confidences seems to have languished from this time forward and it is difficult to resist the conclusion that a change had come over the relations between them. How far this may have been due to Georgina's antipathy to Mitton—"he was an odious man and I always detested him" she declared after his death—can only be conjectured.

It is perhaps significant that soon after this Mitton was replaced as Dickens's legal adviser by Frederic Ouvry, who acted in that capacity for Forster and was honorary solicitor for the Guild of Literature and Art. Dickens had made his acquaintance before 1854 and consulted him in the purchase of Gad's Hill Place early in 1856.[6] During his stay in the summer of 1854 at the villa he had rented near Boulogne, Dickens invited Mitton to join him there. Mitton proposed October 11th for his visit, but Dickens's next letter agreeing to this date was so worded that it might have been intended to discourage the project, even though it ended with "kind regards from us all."[7] Again, Dickens excused himself from accepting an invitation to spend a weekend with his old friend in June 1858 on the plea of being "so liable to be troubled by some untoward thing or other; but we can still avoid the fruit-time."[8] On August 19th, 1860, Dickens invited Mitton to dine with him "that we may talk over old and new times," at the same time

1 *Letters*, I, 659-662.
2 *Ibid.*, I, 670-672.
3 *Ibid.*, I, 676-7.
4 *Ibid.*, I, 783-4.
5 *Ibid.*, II, 53.
6 *The Dickensian*, xlvii, 178 (September, 1851).
7 *Letters*, II, 594.
8 *Ibid.*, III, 27.

giving details of the last illness of his brother Alfred who had died in Manchester.[1] A letter dated March 25th, 1861, however, shows that Mitton was still acting for him in insurance matters and lists his forthcoming readings.[2]

The last letter known to have been addressed by Dickens to his old friend was dated June 13th, 1865, four days after the railway disaster at Staplehurst in which he had been involved. It contained the fullest account of the accident given to any of his correspondents and incidentially implies that Mitton knew nothing

North Lodge, Thomas Mitton's home at Lampton

Photo by P. & P. F. James, Ltd., Heston

of the identity of the ladies who were with him—referred to as " the old lady " who sat opposite and " the young one on my left."[3]

When he witnessed the will of T. J. Thompson on February 19th, 1877, Mitton described himself as " solicitor, Town Hall, Brentford." His name occurs frequently in reports of cases tried at the Brentford Petty Sessions about this time, and as late as May 25th, 1878, he appeared for the plaintiff in a case of assault at a vestry meeting in the Town Hall, Hounslow, called to elect three members of the Burial Board. Mitton's opening speech shows that he was not without a certain sardonic humour. " The meeting was supposed to be a meeting of ratepayers," he is reported to have said, " but it seemed that there was a desire on the part of some parties to be on the Burial Board. Why there should be such an ambition to be on such a board he could not tell. He could under-

[1] *Letters*, III, 171-2.
[2] *Ibid.*, III, 212-3.
[3] *Ibid.*, III, 425-6.

stand that, if there was a Marriage Board or Christening Board and the members were invited to partake of the festivities, there would be an ambition to be on the Board; but unless the coffins were to be divided amongst the members he could not imagine that any person would be anxious to serve on a Burial Board."[1]

Little more than two months after this the villagers were startled by the news that Mrs. Elizabeth Mitton, wife of Mr. Mitton, solicitor, of Lampton, had been found drowned in a pond at Osterley Park, not far from her home, by two of her neighbours. At the inquest held by the coroner for West Middlesex, on August 1st, evidence was given that the deceased, whose age was about 62, had had a very happy domestic life, but had been suffering from great mental depression and suicidal impulses, and had attempted to drown herself in a tank two days previous to her death. To prevent her from repeating the attempt she was placed in charge of a nurse. It was stated that the husband was unable to attend the inquest and that no one was present from the house. The coroner thought that sufficient precautions had not been taken, and in a short editorial the *County of Middlesex Chronicle* held that culpable negligence had been proved but that no blame could be attached to the husband, who was conducting a case in the County Court at the time. A verdict of " Suicide whilst in an unsound state of mind " was returned by the jury.[2]

Mitton himself did not long survive this domestic tragedy. On September 13th he made his own will, leaving *inter alia* £150 to Maria Campbell, widow, 11 Huntingdon Street, Barnsbury; £19 19*s*. to his lodge-keeper and gardener, Charles Turner of Lampton; £10 to his servant John Sexton; £10 to his clerk Harry Sparks; and £15 to his housekeeper Miss Curtis. The residue of his estate of £1,500 he bequeathed to William Cooper, 20 Theobald Square, Rochester, a lay clerk in Rochester Cathedral, who as sole executor proved the will on October 23rd. Mitton died on October, 9th 1878, at North Lodge, Lampton Road, Hounslow, and was buried at Heston.

The strangest part of Mitton's story, as recorded by Georgina Hogarth, has now to be told. William Cooper assured her that until summoned to Lampton by the dying man he had known Mitton only as his wife's lawyer and the trustee of their marriage settlement. At Lampton he found the house " in a state of great gloom and horror, a woman who had been Mitton's housekeeper having committed suicide in a pond in the garden and an inquest having just been held on her body." Cooper's account continued: " I was shown to Mitton's bedroom. He was evidently a dying man. He said ' I have sent for you because you are about the only honest man I know, and I have to tell you that I mean to leave you everything I have.' I was considerably startled, and said ' But you scarcely know me; surely you have relations of your own to whom to leave your property !' Mitton replied 'I have a sister, but I hate her to that degree that if I thought she would ever benefit by any money after my death I believe I should come back to take it away from her.' His only wish, he said, was that the stone

1 *County of Middlesex Chronicle*, 1st June, 1878, p.6.
2 3rd August, 1878, pp. 5, 7. *Cf. Middlesex Mercury*, 3rd August, 1878, p. 4; *Brentford and Hounslow Independent*, 3rd August, 1878, p. 5.

over his grave and the inscription on it should be exactly like those over the grave of Charles Dickens in Westminster Abbey.

Having a family to support, Cooper accepted the legacy and moved with them from Rochester to Lampton, only to find that as Mitton's heir he would become liable for refunding certain sums of which the solicitor had been trustee and which in at least one case he had appropriated to his own use. Cooper went on to tell Georgina that on going over the property he had found in an old disused out-house the tin box entrusted to Mitton by Dickens 34 years previously. When he examined the contents some time afterwards and realized that they included letters to Dickens he consulted his old schoolmaster, the Rev. Robert Whiston,[1] who had been headmaster of the Rochester Grammar School and a friend of Dickens. Knowing that an edition of Dickens's letters was then in preparation, Mr. Whiston wrote to Georgina Hogarth, and arranged for Cooper to call on her with the box. She at once recognised her own handwriting on the label and on examining the box next day found in it letters from Dickens to Mitton, " many of which related to the most private money matters of C.D.'s father and other members of his family." There were also letters to Dickens from his father, mother, brothers and other relations, " almost all of them in the same tone, money difficulties, applications for money, all proving how from his earliest start in life Charles Dickens had helped and had greatly suffered from almost every member of his family. And most especially from his father. There was a correspondence in that box, letters from both father and mother, and other documents and letters from Mitton on the same subject, which revealed not only debt and difficulties, but most discreditable and dishonest dealing on the part of the father towards the son. Besides these family letters there were letters from all sorts of people, friends, business, begging letters—in short, *all* letters that he had kept indiscriminately for years, many from very celebrated people in literature and art, and there were some old deeds, contracts with publishers, etc."

Before deciding on her next step Georgina consulted Mrs. Forster and Frederick Ouvry. Cooper was paid the £100 for which he had asked, Mrs. Forster offered £50 for the diaries, and Ouvry gave Georgina his cheque for £100 stipulating only that she should hand over to him some interesting autographs for his collection. Among the letters he received were some from Thomas Hood, Washington Irving and Sydney Smith. The subsequent fate of the Dickens letters thus sold to Ouvry has been explained by Professor Adrian in his recent biography of Georgina Hogarth. Many letters from Forster were given to Mrs. Forster with the diaries. Georgina spent two days going through the contents of the box and destroyed " quantities of letters to Mitton on family affairs " as well as later ones relating to what she described as " serious and disgraceful money matters " of John Dickens.

Georgina Hogarth's narrative exhibits Thomas Mitton in a

[1] Rev. Robert Whiston (1808-1895), was headmaster of the Cathedral Grammar School, Rochester, 1842-77, where he discovered a serious misappropriation of trust funds, which he exposed in a book entitled *Cathedral Trusts and their Fulfilment*, 1850. For writing this he was removed by the Dean and Chapter on 19th October, 1849, but reinstated by the Visitor, 1st, January, 1853.

rather different light from that in which he appears in the few biographical sketches of him which have been published and in Dickens's letters to him. Against the unfavourable verdict of Georgina, whose dislike of the solicitor may have warped her judgment, must be set an obituary notice, evidently written by one who knew him, which appeared in the *County of Middlesex Chronicle*, October 12th, 1878:

" The deceased, who was in his 66th year, was well known at the Brentford Police Court, where he had practised as a solicitor for a great number of years. Mr. Mitton to the outside world appeared to be one of the most irritable and eccentric of men; but those who were intimate with him knew him to be a kind-hearted charitable man, and many are the tales told of his refusing to take fees from his poorer clients, when the day went against them. The deceased had for some months past been in a bad state of health, and the very distressing circumstances attending the death of his wife some little time since, produced a shock to the system from which he never recovered. The medical cause of death, however, as disclosed by a post-mortem examination was a tumour on the lung."[1]

A briefer notice in the *Brentford and Hounslow Independent* read: " We regret to have to record the death of Mr. Thomas Mitton, solicitor, which took place at his residence at Lampton, early on Wednesday morning. He was 66 years of age. Both in his appearance and character he was somewhat extraordinary, and it is not surprising that the late Charles Dickens should have made use of his eccentricities in one of his works."[2] This is presumably a reference to John Wemmick, the managing clerk to Jaggers in *Great Expectations*, who has been said to reflect some of the characteristics of Thomas Mitton.[3] Wemmick was " a dry man, rather short in stature, with a square wooden face, whose expressions seemed to have been imperfectly chipped out with a dull-edged chisel. There were some marks in it that might have been dimples, if the material had been softer and the instrument finer, but which, as it was, were only dints. The chisel had made three or four of these attempts at embellishment over his nose, but had given them up without an effort to smooth them off. I judged him to be a bachelor from the frayed condition of his linen, and he appeared to have sustained a good many bereavements; for he wore at least four mourning rings, besides a brooch representing a lady and a weeping willow at a tomb with an urn on it. I noticed too, that several rings and seals hung at his watch-chain, as if he were quite laden with remembrances of departed friends. He had glittering eyes—small, keen, and black—and thin, wide mottled lips. He had had them, to the best of my belief, from forty to fifty years."

To what extent Thomas Mitton conformed to this description we have at present no means of knowing. No portrait of him has come to light and none of his letters appears to have been preserved, It may be noted, however, that Wemmick had a little wooden cottage at Walworth, in the midst of plots of garden, where he

1 *County of Middlesex Chronicle*, 12th October, 1878, p. 6.
2 *Brentford and Hounslow Independent*, 12, October, 1878, p. 3.
3 A. L. Hayward, *The Dickens Encyclopedia*, 1924, p. 165; *Middlesex Chronicle*, 19th October, 1956.

kept a pig, fowls and rabbits, and grew cucumbers. He was his own engineer, carpenter, plumber and gardener, devoted himself to the care of his aged father, and his guiding principle was to take care of portable property and never on any account to lose an opportunity of securing it. The possession of this commodity by Miss Skiffins appealed to him so strongly that he made her his wife.

The conflicting statements made about him by his contemporaries do little to provide a satisfactory basis for an appraisal of Mitton's character and conduct, nor can the graver implications of Georgina Hogarth's indictment be accepted without definite proof. Eccentric and irritable he may well have been, but beneath an unprepossessing exterior he obviously had compensating qualities of heart and mind. Many questions must remain unanswered until further research elucidates the strange story of the man who was for so many years the friend and counsellor of Charles Dickens.

THE MANCHESTER ATHENAEUM

Dickens visited Manchester in October 1843 to preside at a soirée which was held in the Free Trade Hall in order to raise funds to support the Manchester Athenaeum. This followed a bazaar held for the same purpose. The Athenaeum had been founded in 1835 but had encountered rather considerable financial difficulties. Dickens's speech at the soirée has been printed and many accounts of the proceedings are extant. He spoke mainly about the need for education of the very poor and expressed his deep sympathy with movements of popular education such as the Athenaeum. He was given a very warm reception and a minute of 23 November records that after allowing for expenses £2085. 19*s*. 9*d*. was raised by means of the bazaar and soirée. This went a considerable way towards meeting the debt. Dickens's reply to the resolution offering him a Life Membership was printed in the Dickensian for March, 1938. He is said to have treasured the certificate of membership which was on vellum in a gilt frame.

The Minute Book of the Directors of the Athenaeum has recently come to light after a long disappearance and it has now been deposited in the Local History Library of the city. The Librarian, Mr. W. H. Shercliff, not long ago recounted the story to the Manchester Branch of the Fellowship, and through his courtesy we are able to present the text of the minute which gave Dickens so much pleasure:

> Resolved that Life Membership be presented to Charles Dickens, Esq., with the hearty thanks of the Board, for his very great kindness in presiding at the Soirée: for the admirable address delivered by him, and for the offer of his services when again required. The Directors also beg to assure him that the honour conferred upon the Athenaeum by his presence among its members will be remembered with the warmest feelings of gratitude and delight.

THE THEATRICAL TERNANS

Part IX

By Malcolm Morley

THE will of Charles Dickens was dated May 12th, 1869, and the first item it contained was a legacy of £1,000 for Miss Ellen Lawless Ternan. She alone of the three sisters was a beneficiary. There was no concealment. Had Dickens wanted his friendship with Ellen to have been kept a secret from the world, he would surely have arranged this bequest in a different manner. The money could have been left in trust to the novelist's lieutenant W. H. Wills, or to another loyal henchman, with instructions to deal with the gift in accordance with the wish of Dickens and without the name of the recipient being mentioned in the will.

Over the years the affection of Dickens for the Ternans had never diminished. They had brought him companionship and solace at a time when he was feeling lonely and misunderstood. They were " theatre " and his greatest love among the Arts was the theatre. A burning desire of his youth was to have been an actor and his earliest writings included a number of pieces for the stage. Success as a novelist precluded him from fully indulging his liking of the theatre. He found compensation in amateur acting and in a lesser degree in the Readings he gave from his novels. These latter, at the best, were no more than triumphant echoes of the theatre. He loved talking about the stage, about plays and players. With the Ternans, mother and three daughters, the conversation would be that which had unceasing interest for him—shop. It was natural for him to help the family in whatever way he could. He used his influence with Charles Fechter to obtain a part in *The Master of Ravenswood* for Mrs. Ternan when she had reason to return to the stage: he had financed the vocal training in Italy of Fanny, the eldest daughter, intent upon achievement in opera, and, when later she had turned to literature, had assisted her appearance in print. Maria, in whose ability he had great faith, Dickens had recommended to the foremost theatrical managers. She. like her sister, was to go from one Art to another, running the gamut of stage, music, painting and authorship. Ellen, the youngest girl, though apprenticed to the theatre, had little ambition as an actress. Quietude was, perhaps, what she valued most. Ellen was the most domesticated of the sisters and, when age first began to curtail Mrs. Ternan's activities, it was she who was better able to give her care and attention. Fanny was in Florence and Maria had responsibilities in Oxford. In making his will Dickens, inevitably, gave thought to the Ternans. Were the young women likely to be in need? The two elder ones were married and their circumstances if not affluent, were comfortable. Ellen, less secure than either was cared for in his will. The £1,000 she was to inherit might be regarded as a dowry against the time when she, like the others, would marry. Such a legacy would be the equivalent of about four times the amount to-day.

Fanny's marriage to easy-going Tom Trollope was undoubtedly a success. The only jangling of the wedding bells was revealed in

a half-told tale of a difference between them, apparently something to do with Tom's daughter Bice. The fourteen -year old girl, though still regarding her step-mother with great affection, was disinclined to study and preferred parties to lessons. Tom and Fanny argued as to what should be done about her. In 1867 Tom brought her to England to be placed in a school at Brighton but Fanny did not accompany them being seemingly in disagreement with the solution, if such it was. It was the first time she and Tom had been separated since their marriage. With the problem of Bice more or less settled, good feeling was restored between husband and wife. Their partnership grew closer and during the remainder of their lives the two were as one about everything.

War was declared between France and Germany when Tom, Fanny and Bice were holiday-making in Heidelberg. At the same time Ellen was in Paris with the doggedly devoted servant-friend Jane. Caught by the tide of battle, the two sisters were divided by conflicting armies. Whilst Ellen was speeding from the French capital, Fanny and her party were hurrying out of Germany. Tom rose to the occasion, fought for places in the last train leaving Heidelberg for Berne, from whence the refugees were able to reach Ricorboli later in the year.

The fall of the French Empire had political reverberations in Italy, then a divided country in process of consolidation under Garibaldi. In the general upheaval the city of Florence went through a financial crisis in which Tom was a sufferer. He was reluctantly forced to sell the Ricorboli villa and dispose of his treasured library, bit by bit. It was a sad blow but Tom, ever resilient, never doubted his power to provide more than sufficient for every day wants. His books were bringing in royalties and he had hopes of literary work in the new capital of Rome which he considered the city where he could begin life anew. Fanny, too, was contributing to the family funds as her novels were regularly issued by Chapman and Hall. In 1871 the firm published *Anne Furness,* a three-decker told in the first person by a young girl living in an English north-country town. Though the love story is patterned in Victorian mould, most of the characters are well drawn, Particularly vivid are those of the scheming gamblers at the Races and that of a fanatical Methodist Preacher.

Fanny, prompted by Tom, paid a visit to Oxford in the autumn of 1872. She did not know it would be the last time she was to see her mother, the once celebrated Mrs. Ternan. During Fanny's absence, Tom set his teeth and with grim determination freed himself fully of his literary goods and chattels. When she returned it was to find all arrangements had been made for the removal to Rome where many of their Florentine friends had already established themselves. There was Alfred Austin, their long term guest at Ricorboli, now correspondent for the London Standard. Tom's policy of " Never Despair " was to win in the Vatican City where he and his wife were to live for the next fifteen years; Tom blissfully oblivious of the approach of old age and Fanny enjoying the mental growth of her middle years. At first Tom wrote scattered articles for the London *Daily News* and other papers but, Austin

resigning from the *Standard* in February 1873, he accepted the proffered post of Rome Correspondent for that journal.

Tom Trollope had a far happier disposition than his introspective brother Anthony. Behind his big beard was a mouth wreathed in smiles, in full agreement with mirthful eyes above. Rome soon became the centre of his interests. Here, he and his wife entertained the continually changing cosmopolitian company gathered in the city. A daily cable to the Standard told of doings that might, or might not, be of news value to London readers. Fanny was occupied with her novels and the serial stories she wrote for such magazines as " The Graphic " and " The Gentlewoman." Her writings echoed many of her own experiences and several of the people introduced were modelled upon those with whom she

Fanny Trollope

copyright photograph

was acquainted in life. In her novel of *A Charming Fellow* is the majestic Mrs. Errington, well-meaning but overwhelmingly class conscious. The name of Fanny's great-grandmother was the uncommon one of Errington. Could the dominant lady in Fanny's story be intended for a likeness of one of her own forbears ?

Like Ships upon the Sea had chapters descriptive of Rome showing Fanny's considerable acquaintance with the scene. The intrigues connected with the founding of a paper and the questionable methods employed in a proposed scheme for reclaiming the Pontine Marshes indicated the observant nature of the authoress. Similar plottings and plannings were then prevalent in Rome. *Cousin Isidor* is the tale of a vain old man, a wandering batchelor, who pens books that nobody willingly reads. Returning from the West Indies, he manages, in his blundering way, to bring about the happy marriage of his cousin's daughter, a girl by whom he had been consistently snubbed. Fanny's knowledge of languages enabled her to translate *Italy from Alps to Etna* from the German of Streller and *Nero* from the Italian of Pietro Cossa, regarded as his

best drama. With Tom she was responsible for two volumes of picturesque biography entitled *Homes and Haunts of the Italian Poets*. Pope Louis XIII heard her deliver some of their verses and sent a special blessing " to the lady who had spoken such remarkably good Italian." His Holiness expressed no disapproval of her book *Among Aliens* which depicted a Roman Catholic priest contriving the admission of an English teacher to a Nunnery in order that the Church should gain her small fortune. The principal character in the story is the half-sister of the teacher, a young woman, who gives lessons in painting,much as Maria did when she joined the English colony in Rome.

The parting of the way between Maria and her husband seems to have been final at the time of Dickens's death. William Rowland Taylor walked out, and Maria had no regrets. For a short time following the death of her mother, Maria lived at the " The Lawn " in the Banbury Road, Oxford, where Jane Brown, losing her husband the carpenter soon after her marriage, had joined the household. When Maria gave up the biggish house and migrated to Italy, Jane went to Georgina Hogarth then residing in London. Fanny had had little difficulty in persuading her sister to come to Rome. The two were again able to enter each other's lives, sharing mutual interests and the mutual friendships formed in the city where Art and Literature had countless disciples. Painting filled Maria's days, not portraits alone but landscape and general subjects. Her talent was quickly recognised by the English set and also by connoisseurs among the élite of Roman society. From both circles Maria had a number of pupils to whom she gave instruction in pictorial Art. On November 30th, 1877, she was awarded the Artistic-National Diploma of Rome.

Searching the scene with a painter's eye, Maria made many journeys away from the capital. One of her best known pictures is of Venice where she often went. In 1880 she was in Egypt and the following year, a rover artist, she spent several months adventurously treading unexploited regions bounding the Mediterrean, places where few white women had been before. In Tunis she met the Bey who allowed her within the precincts of his hareem and, with no more luggage than a hand bag, she covered the vast tract of the Enfida to reach the sacred city of Kairouan, a place where foreign women were stoned in the streets if they appeared unveiled. Many long distances were made on foot as she directed her steps towards Algeria, finding friends among the tribe of Krounirs and listening to their talk of a future great African Empire of Mahomedans. The itinerary, covering so much strange territory, was one chosen by Maria for herself: organised tourist traffic was little known in the Eighteen-eighties. She recorded her impressions of this other Continent in her paintings, in articles contributed to English journals and in an entertaining volume *Old Letters from North Africa*, published some years later.

Bice, who had left the nest in Rome, was to marry Charles Stuart-Wortley in the summer of 1880. Her death the ensuing July, when her daughter Beatrice was born, dealt Tom a shattering blow, against which his adaptable philosophy found for him but small comfort. He was in his seventy-second year but would

never admit to growing old. For another five years he continued his work on the *Standard* until, urged by Fanny, he resigned from the paper in 1886 and Maria, adding journalism to her accomplishments became Rome correspondent of the *London Standard*.

Meantime what of Ellen and her husband, George Wharton Robinson? Back in England from a honeymoon in Italy they settled down in Margate where George, commenced his teaching career on Ellen's considered advice. With a friend for partner he,

Mr. and Mrs. G. W. Robinson
on their wedding day

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shortly afterwards, took over the school and, as headmaster, ruled its destinies for the next decade. The serious Robinson shirked none of the responsibilities of office. All his energies were devoted to the school, all his mind to the instruction of the scholars. Ellen helped materially, teaching in some of the classes, Elocution and French being her particular subjects. He rarely relaxed and on occasions would sink back exhausted from extra work he had undertaken. She stood by him, giving encouragement, eager always to dispel his downcast moments. The two were cosily married and the cosiness was increased when their first child, Geoffrey, was born on February 6th, 1879. Five years later, in a London Nursing Home on Haverstock Hill where Ellen had gone, the family was supplemented by Gladys, a little girl who arrived on October 9th, 1884. The Robinsons now numbered four.

To be continued

The portrait of George Wharton Robinson in the last issue of the Dickensian erroneously ranks him as a Captain. Robinson was never in the services.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE THEATRICALS

Through the kindness of Miss Audrey Baker, the great-granddaughter of the artist, we are able to reproduce some hitherto unknown pictures of some of Dickens's private theatricals at Tavistock House. They are the work of Nathaniel Powell, 1813-1873, a Carey Street Wine Merchant, and later proprietor, with his brothers, of the Flint Glass Works, Whitefriars. He resided,

from 1855, at Bedford House, Tavistock Square, and was thus the neighbour, of Dickens on his left, and of Frank Stone, on his right.

Mr. Powell was by way of being an amateur artist and when Dickens invited him to the private theatrical performances given

at Tavistock House, made what he described as " rough sketches of the characters," to preserve as souvenirs.

The first two are of *The Frozen Deep*, in 1857. The upper gives an admirable idea of how the second act, set in a hut in the Arctic, appeared on that miniature stage. The two figures on the left

are probably Mark Lemon (in the foreground) and Dickens. The second shows impressions of Dickens (left) and Lemon.

The above shows three performers in *Mr. Nightingale's Diary*, which followed the performance of *The Lighthouse* in 1855. They are, reading from the left, Mark Lemon, Dickens, and Wilkie Collins.

Mr. Powell's diary, which his great-grandaughter has preserved. refers briefly to these sketches and adds that he further treasured a note from Dickens complaining " about some straw accidentally let loose in our closure, which proved that his temper was not always under his complete control."

L.C.S.

FORTHCOMING BOOKS

Malcolm Morley's *History of the Marylebone Theatre* will occasion interest in this old house and its long history, which includes at least one Dickensian episode. The first of two volumes will appear this autumn, published for the St. Marylebone Society, by the Strathmore Bookshop, 145 Park Road, London, N.W.8, price 5*s*. Another theatre book for Dickensians, *Costumes by Nathans*, by A. J. Nathan, is to appear in October from Newnes. It is a fascinating story, including a chapter devoted to Dickens's association with the firm, from which he obtained the costumes for his many amateur theatrical productions.

DICKENS AND THE NOVEL

By K. J. Fielding

EVER since the last war there has been a mounting concern with Dickens as a *novelist*. In Dickens as a story-teller and an entertainer, interest has never flagged; but, more and more, critical attention has fastened on him as a great master in the dominant literary form of the novel. A new American *Guide to Doctoral Dissertations in Victorian Literature, 1886-1958*, shows that one third of the eighty-two studies ever written on Dickens have appeared since 1945. It is a welcome trend. A glance round our own bookshelves confirms it. The only misgiving one has is that a gulf is opening between those who turn to Dickens for enjoyment, and those who write about him with a critical axe to grind. Scanning the index of the most recent book on Dickens as a writer, for example, one may look at the entry for *Pickwick*, and find a reference to six pages on the " development of seriousness in," followed by nothing but references to the book's " language " and comparisons to a few other works. The same index has entries for " humours " but none for " humour "; for " class " and " crime," but not " comedy "; nine lines of references to " death ", none at all to " life "; none whatsoever under " justice "—" see injustice "! This is not exceptional. There is already a division between the critics and the readers; and as it is clear that there will be no stopping those who write about Dickens (nor any wish to do so) the answer lies in the devoted " Dickensian " mastering some of the moves in criticism of the Novel. Two new books should certainly interest those who have already turned their attention to doing so. The first is *The Theory of the Novel in England, 1850-1870*, by Richard Stang (Routledge and Kegan Paul, 32*s*.) and the second, *Novelists on the Novel* edited by Miriam Allott (the same publishers, 30*s*.). They are not " light reading "; but each provides something we are in need of to understand the Novel as it was when Dickens was writing, and all that has been said about it since.

The first argues that the novelists of the mid-nineteenth century not only thought about the novel quite as intelligently as writers of today, but that there was a body of critical discussion about it scattered among contemporary reviews and articles. The second is a skilfully-edited compendium of what English and foreign novelists have said about the practice of their craft over the past two hundred years. Each of these books ranges widely, and is a thoroughly finished, if not exhaustive critical work. If we look simply at something of what they have to say or suggest about Dickens it is only because that, within these pages, it is natural.

It might have been better for Mr. Stang to have written about " theories " of the novel, rather than " The Theory ": the beginning of critical wisdom about it is the recognition that there is no such thing. He has a strong case for showing that the great practitioners of the novel, and a few of the reviewers of the period, thought intently about the form in which they wrote. But what impresses us most is the way in which he is able to show that many of the more well-known remarks about the nature of fiction

were quite unpretentiously anticipated by weekly reviewers. The novelists themselves on the other hand, knew well what they were about; they could write about their craft; but their theories of the Novel were somewhat vague. This appears to have mattered very little as long as they were experimenting and creating something new, as the best of them were. In fact, there hardly could be any theory about what they were writing until it was finished: like Alice, they could see what they meant only after they had said it. When it did begin to matter was later on, when there was a large body of popular fiction known to both the writer and his public. It was always coming between them. When Dickens began writing, for example, he had never read a word of Jane Austen. By the mid-century, Lytton could dismiss her as the cult of a few critics, and Lewes had to lend Charlotte Brontë her books in order to show her what he wanted. By the sixties, she had begun to be established. She had to be charted by the critics and placed by the writers before they could write with freedom. Precedents were being established; theories were being evolved; rules were being drawn up. The novelist had to know about them as well as to master the details of his craft. Only the naive writer could be a best-seller; for if a novelist was to feel free to be original and unhampered, he had to have a comprehensive theory of his own. All of which, (if it is accepted) goes to show that all theories of the novel are evolved in relation to the needs of the time, the demands of this or that novelist, or in an attempt to codify the various practices that have grown up. Practically none proceed directly from the nature of fiction, since this is so varied that any results would be too vague.

Of course, this has all been said before: among others, by the high priest of the Novel, Henry James. It is in the name of James that many critics wish to dogmatise about the novel. Within the due limits of sensitive discrimination, it is James whom the editor of *Novelists on the Novel* places at the centre of her work. Almost all that is written about "form," the "point of view," "character," the "time factor," and the need to "dramatize" in the novel, stems from James. Yet it was he, above all, who insisted that the novel should be "perfectly free". It was he who wrote of Trollope that "any theory was good which enabled him to produce the works which he put forth between 1856 and 1869 or later." Again, at the end of his essay on the "Art of Fiction", he wrote: "There is no impression of life, no manner of seeing it and feeling it, to which the plan of the novelist may not offer a place; you have only to remember that talents so dissimilar as those of Alexandre Dumas and Jane Austen, Charles Dickens and Gustave Flaubert have worked in this field with equal glory." Finally, it was James himself who made the revealing admission in a letter, that as a reader (and presumably as a critic) his point of view was always that of the practising novelist who was thinking of how *he* would choose to write: "I *can* read nothing, if I read at all, save in the light of how one would one's self proceed in tackling the same data."

This is certainly not to dismiss James! It is put forward only with the suggestion that as he was not always so dogmatic as he

became later in life, he positively benefits from not being accepted too respectfully. Indeed, one wonders what to make of a man who can write, for example, that: " The analogy between the art of the painter and the art of the novelist is, so far as I am able to see complete. Their inspiration is the same, their process . . . is the same, their success is the same. . . . Their cause is the same, and the honour of one is the honour of the other !" To most of us this is incomprehensible. If one is to consider fiction seriously, one must know something of James. He has more to teach than anyone. Yet it is a great mistake to allow him to dominate one's view of the Novel, as, give him half a chance he will. Clearly, neither Professor Stang nor Mrs. Abbott is quite uncritical of James; but one feels that they are so respectful that criticism may be lulled to rest.

Perhaps one may regret that one of the *Novelists* not represented *on the Novel*, is H. G. Wells: not that, in his dispute with James, Wells did not have the worst of it; not that his practice as a novelist did not bear out what James had to say more clearly than he could put it himself. But Wells had something to contribute. " James," he makes someone say in *Boon*, " has never discovered that a novel isn't a picture." He fought for his belief that a novel is the better for being about something substantially important; he stood up for " inclusion " rather than " selection "; he mocked James' style, his " adverbial stuffing " and " vast paragraphs that sweat and pant "; and, in all this, it is a bold critic who will declare that James was always right and that Wells was wrong. In this, too, one may argue that Wells is much closer to a tradition that links Dickens and the modern novel. Yet ultimately, perhaps, it is false to contrast their views: Dickens, James, Wells all demanded the greatest freedom for the novelist (and especially for their own ways of writing) both in subject and in choosing a manner of treating it that would suit himself.

A notable discovery of Professor Stang is an article on the novel that was contributed to *All the Year Round*, " The Sensational Williams " (Feb. 13, 1864). Who the author was is not known; yet, though one may not go quite as far as Professor Stang in talking about it as if it directly expressed Dickens's own opinions, he is probably right in claiming that it comes extremely close to representing them. It claimed that the novel was an art form as great as any that has yet appeared, and capable of the great effects of tragedy. It demanded the right to treat what subjects the author chose. Charlotte Brontë, one may remember, had shrunk from approving her sister's creation of Heathcliffe, but the writer declared that: " The mystery of evil is as interesting to us now as it was in the time of SHAKESPEARE; and it is downright affectation or effeminacy to say that we are never to glance into that abyss, but are perpetually to construct our novels out of the amenities of respectable, easy-going men and women." Whether this had the direct sanction of Dickens or not, it certainly represents the mood in which he must have begun *Our Mutual Friend* and, even more, the spirit in which he was to undertake *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*.

In another article in *All the Year Round*, " The Spirit of Fiction "

(July 27, 1867) a contributor argued that every writer had his own conception of reality, and everyone would accordingly treat his subject differently: "Mr. Wilkie Collins and Mr. George Macdonald would vary extremely in the treatment of similar characters and events; George Eliot and Mrs. Gaskell would make the most opposite use of the same material . . . we are all partly creators of the objects we perceive . . ." It does not actually mention Dickens, but it goes on to speak of "the common observer" or ordinary man, and how he sometimes accuses "the writer of genius" of "intentional exaggeration, substitution, addition," and how he has never been able to see in society "the startling phenomena which he condemns in romance as melodramatic and unnatural. The reason is, that such an individual has never developed the sense required for seeing such things; and, because he is partially blind, he accuses his informant of wilful invention."

It is a great virtue of both the books by Mrs. Abbott and Professor Stang that they not only bring us back to what writers of the day had to say about their art, but helpfully interpret them for us. It is what is needed in any present study of Victorian fiction; and they have so much to offer that related ideas are of all kinds bound to start up in the mind of every reader. One, for example, is on the matter of Dickens's "realism" and "imagination." It is an endless topic; but one wonders whether we have not heard a little too much of how rarely it is that an author draws directly from life. Of course, as Mrs. Abbott makes abundantly clear by examples, all writers declare they don't! (It may be remembered that Somerset Maugham blandly denied making use of Sir Hugh Walpole for a character in *Cakes and Ale* while Walpole was alive, then calmly admitted that he had done so once Walpole was dead). Yet it is all very well to contrast the passages in which Dickens declared that he wanted to see the magistrate Mr. Laing, so that he could pillory him in *Oliver Twist*, with the letter to Leigh Hunt in which he denied that he intended to show him up in the same kind of way as Skimpole. It is as well to bear in mind that what Dickens said to Hunt was one thing, and what he privately wrote about the exactness of his portraiture to friends such as the Hon. Mrs. Richard Watson was another.

It is equally all very well, for James to say of any character in fiction, "Let us have . . . as little as possible about its 'being' Mr. This or Mrs. That. If it adjusts itself with the least truth to its new life it can't possibly be either." One of the mysteries of Dickens's quality as a writer is that he did so often draw from real life: his characters *are* "Mr. This" and "Mrs. That". Mr. Micawber could hardly be more Mr. John Dickens. Miss Seymour Hill protested pitifully at being turned into Miss Mowcher and recognised as "a fiction" wherever she went. The significant thing is that Dickens was a writer who did not work, like James, from casual "germs," "precious particles," or tiny "wind-blown" seeds! For the mere sake of what the latter called "a lacerated lump of life," he once undertook a coach journey, in the depth of a severe winter, from London to Yorkshire, and, after only a minute or two with a man called William Shaw, created

Wackford Squeers. Yet whatever one may think of the form of Dickens's novels, (which have been so vigorously defended of late) the vigour of his characters, the vividness of his settings, the " artistic truth " of many of those parts of his novels which were most directly derived from the life around him, are surely not going to be questioned now ?

All in all, the debate on " the Novel " is endless. Both those who are interested in it as a form, and those whose first love will will always be Dickens, have everything to gain from joining in the discussion, and much to learn from both these books.

LADY CYNTHIA ASQUITH †

She described herself as " an incorrigible looker-forward." Yet, quoting from Christina Rossetti, she called her charming if entirely casual book of reminiscence *Haply I may remember*, and on the title-page added the next line, "And haply may forget ": an ideal presentation of an ageing woman's gaze to the past. But she looked forward in honouring Dickens. To those who knew her only from her regular attendance at Birthday Dinners and from her delightful books, the news of her death early this year came with the added poignancy of loss of one seemingly youthful because but recently known.

There was a strong Dickensian flavour about much of her life. Her being a confessed breadwinner; her engagement as a secretary by J. M. Barrie, not in spite of but because of her complete innocence of shorthand and typewriting—qualities which appealed to Barrie; her description of her first visit to the playhouse: "A few minutes later I had fallen fathoms deep in love—it lasted for years—with Brutus. I suppose Lewis Waller did have something to do with it, but I swear I never thought of him by that name, or, indeed, imagined him as anything other than the 'noblest Roman of them all'." Pure *David Copperfield*. Not surprising, for, at her much-loved home, Stanway, although " much infested by day-guests "—" I did manage to finish *David Copperfield*. Barrie and other grown-ups attended the readings as well as Michael. In fact, they attended more closely than he did " . . . " Raising my swimming eyes from the page, I looked up, hoping to see Michael's face bathed in tears, only to find that, but for Barrie, shaking with silent laughter, the room was *empty*." And again: " Plenty of reading aloud this year—mostly *Pickwick Papers* under the tulip tree." Then also her first article in a newspaper—her first writing—encouraged with great prescience by the late Mrs. Belloc Lowndes; " I can't tell you how much I wanted to draw the attention of my fellow-passengers " (in an omnibus) " to that flaring column. With the utmost difficulty I restrained myself, and also from showing the nice burly policeman, who chided me for so nearly getting run over, the reason for my absent-mindedness." Pure Dickens ! The Fellowship mourns the passing of a distinguished friend. "Haply we may forget "; but we may also " Remember and be glad."

F.G.

THE DICKENS FELLOWSHIP
54th ANNUAL CONFERENCE

at SOUTHEND-ON-SEA

FOR the third time in the lengthening history of the Fellowship its annual Conference was held at Southend-on-Sea by invitation of the flourishing and hospitable Branch there. Again the welcome was of the warmest, and the weekend, crowded with admirably arranged functions, was enjoyed by a large number of members from all over the country, including seventeen from Haarlem, two from the United States, two from New Zealand, and one from Australia.

Proceedings got off to a splendid start with the Civic Reception at the Palace, on Friday evening, May 20th. Alderman A. V. Mussett, J.P., Mayor of Southend, and Mrs. Mussett received the guests, and it was close on midnight, following a programme of dancing and a cabaret, that members reluctantly left for their hotels. The Mayor and Mayoress danced with their guests until the end.

THE BUSINESS MEETING

On Saturday morning, the Annual Business Meeting was opened by the Mayor in a felicitous speech. He was thanked in the most cordial terms by the Chairman of Council, Mrs. Gwen Major, who then proceeded to give the opening address. Beginning with a very apt quotation from a speech given in May 1864 by Dickens, when he himself found himself a Chairman, she paid tribute to our hosts who had organised the gathering under considerable difficulties, which, it was already very apparent, had been notably overcome in a happy and convivial spirit which, she thought, might possibly be attributed, at least in part, to their nearness to our Dutch friends who had given us such a wonderful Conference in Amsterdam last year. Mrs. Major concluded, as she had begun, by quoting another speech of Dickens, made at the Crystal Palace after a firework display, " Flushed with fireworks, I can warrant myself to you as about to imitate those gorgeous illusions by making a brief spurt and dying out." which, said Mrs. Major, she then proposed to imitate also.

The roll-call revealed that there were 186 members present, from 19 branches, including one from New York, one from Philadelphia, and 17 from Haarlem.

The Hon. Secretary then read a message he had received from H.M. the Queen, in response to loyal greetings he had sent her on behalf of Conference.

COUNCIL REPORT followed, read by the Hon. Secretary:

On July 11th this year, the Southend Branch, our host at this Conference, celebrates its Golden Jubilee. We offer them our congratulations and best wishes.

Our numbers this year remain as before: 24 branches in this country and 37 overseas, a total of 61. Conference will later be asked to approve the formation of a new branch in Evanston,

Illinois, U.S.A., but unhappily the Auckland, N.Z. Branch, has had finally to suspend operations from lack of support.

Since last Conference, your Hon. Secretary has carried out a month's lecture tour in Denmark, with the idea of encouraging and spreading an interest in Dickens among schools and English Clubs, publicising the Fellowship and examining the possibilities of reviving a branch in that country. More recently he has carried out a shorter but equally successful tour among the schools in Holland.

The year under review saw the appointment of a lady President, the second only in the history of the Fellowship and the first since the Presidency of Mrs. Kate Perugini, Dickens's second daughter. Our President's interest in our welfare and activities is keen, and only the sudden alteration in the date of a business trip in Italy prevented her from being present at this Conference.

Council would also like to record, on behalf of the Fellowship's members our great appreciation and thanks to our past President, the Very Rev. W. R. Matthews, Dean of St. Paul's, for his double period of office.

The Inter-Branch correspondence scheme, introduced this year has been warmly welcomed both by branches overseas and in this country. The preponderance of overseas branches has necessitated several being allocated to branches in the Home country, but this does not appear to dampen the enthusiasm of those officers and members, who have so willingly shouldered the additional work involved.

Appreciation of the branches to the usefulness of the scheme is neatly summed up in the monthly bulletin of our Philadelphia Branch, in which they say—" It was the thought of Council in London that closer ties of relationship and friendship could best be fostered through Inter-branch correspondence. Among the three branches allotted to Wolverhampton, England, was our branch, their Hon. Secretary not only sent a most interesting letter, but also their programme for the year. There were three programmes that might serve as suggestions for our own meetings . . ." which are then enumerated.

This is one of the likely uses of the scheme and was in Council's mind when introducing it—the mutual exchange of ideas. It is the fervent hope of Council that the scheme may progress and prosper. Later, it may be a good idea to have a ' general post ' of branches in the allocations and thereby vary the interest.

The organisation of a Dickens competition was left by Council to the officers. Many branches indicated their interest in such a project, but could not say what support might be forthcoming until the nature of the competition was known and what form it was to take. It was considered best to proceed on the lines of a quiz, with the opportunity for competitors to exercise their ingenuity, besides giving evidence of their knowledge of the novels. All answers are to be found in the books indicated, by diligent searching and reading, but the production of a good neo-Wellerism will give the judges a chance to make a selection from all correct or near correct entries.

It is hoped that the purpose of this competition, to encourage

study and closer reading of Dickens will be achieved, but that it will also provide pleasant amusement for members. Ample time is being allowed so that overseas members will have an opportunity of competing. Suggestions for other types of competition will be welcomed.

In the theatre and film world Dickens has been left practically alone except for occasional revivals including an adaptation of *Great Expectations* at the Mermaid Theatre in London. Dickens has been much in evidence—too much perhaps—on sound radio and television. A sketchy radio version of *Dombey and Son* for the children, with a large percentage of commentator and a small percentage of Dickens; a patchy version of *Little Dorrit*, for adults—a difficult subject—strikingly good in parts, but failing completely in others (in its attempt, for example, to capture the brilliance of the Circumlocution Office passages); an excellent television version for older children of *Great Expectations* directed by that very conscientious and successful children's television producer, Mrs. Dorothea Brooking—possibly the best ever; and a not so brilliant, but reasonably adequate television production of *Bleak House*, This comprised the B.B.C.'s tribute to Dickens during the year. Several Commercial Television efforts, very loosely based on Dickens, are perhaps best left to charitable oblivion.

A rise in the sale of his books and an increased demand in public libraries, which we are assured follows such productions, may justify these abortive attempts to capture his genius in another medium.

The Oxford Press have recently published *The Speeches of Dickens*. the most complete collection ever made and far superior to and more comprehensive than earlier collected editions. The present collection is edited by Dr. K. J. Fielding,

In America, the principal publications during the year were *Charles Dickens—The World of his Novels* by J. Hillis Miller, *The Maturity of Dickens* by Monroe Engel, a book of excerpts called *The Comic World of Dickens*, by Bernard Schilling and a children's life of Dickens by Catherine Owens Peare.

The publication in this country of *Dickens Incognito* by Felix Aylmer, threw new light on the private life of Dickens, and although it caused a mild stir in literary circles, its impact was considerably lessened by the production of proof that its principal conclusions were incorrect. Second thoughts are obviously called for from its author.

The Dickensian has continued throughout the year to publish articles of great value in the study of Dickens and our Hon. Editor is to be congratulated on the high standard maintained. He can hardly blame his readers, if in the Oliver tradition, they wish there was more and that publication was at shorter intervals.

During 1959, there were 7,295 paying visitors to the Dickens House, an increase of nearly 600 over the previous year. This increase is being maintained during the current year.

The Trustees have pleasure in reporting that two valuable and interesting additions were made to the Dickens Library and Museum. The late Dr. S. A. Henry and his sister, Miss M. Henry presented to the library a wonderfully preserved collection of

original numbers of everything Dickens published in this form, with two exceptions; also many first editions and collections of original illustrations. The library at Doughty Street has now, therefore, what is probably one of the finest collections in the world of Dickens in the original parts, which will be invaluable to Dickensian students in the future. The collection has been housed in a special bookcase in the study and members should take an early opportunity of seeing this wonderful addition to our treasures.

Our Life President, Mr. Henry Charles Dickens has kindly lent to the Dickens Museum, the court costumes worn by his grandfather, for presentation at Court.

No. 1, Devonshire Terrace: it is sad to think that address no longer exists. The replacement of the house where Dickens lived for eleven years, by an office block has now been completed. The Dickensian association of the site has been adequately indicated by a stone tablet and one corner of the building also contains a most effective portland stone panel, with excellent reliefs of Dickens and characters from six of the famous books written at No. 1 Devonshire Terrace.

In fulfilment of our fourth aim, to preserve places of Dickensian association, we have been most successful. The preservation of 48 Doughty Street has now been given a greater measure of permanence by the Minister of Housing's approval of a Preservation Order applying to the whole street.

It is a pleasing thought that as a direct result of the Fellowship's work in saving 48 Doughty Street, and the way it has been kept since, this important preservation has been brought about of this part of 18th century London.

Time, however, has taken its toll in spite of preservation orders, and nearby houses, including our other property, No. 49, have been the subject of Dangerous Structure notices. The Dickens House has so far steered clear of this trouble, but the Trustees of the Dickens House are naturally keeping a very close watch upon the situation.

Time again is taking its toll of Dickens's school in the Hampstead Road—the remains of Wellington House Academy. At the instigation of the Fellowship, the London County Council has agreed to replace the Fellowship's original plaque by a new one, which will be more legible. How long the building will survive is a doubtful question and one which the Fellowship is powerless to do anything about. The preservation of the Swiss Châlet is the subject of a separate report.

Having preserved, or been instrumental in preserving buildings connected with Dickens, both at the beginning and the end of his literary career, the Fellowship might now, even more usefully turn its efforts to something more permanent than bricks and mortar; something perhaps more after the heart of Dickens himself, who, as you know, had no faith in stone memorials.

The Fellowship must not rest upon its laurels if it is to survive and become a respected force in the modern literary world We must direct our efforts beyond our original aims and objects. We must preserve our dignity by all means but move with the times.

Where better can we look than towards the welfare of youth and to the furtherance of education?

In 1912, the Fellowship, with the help of the Press and the Theatre celebrated the centenary of the birth of Charles Dickens in quite an impressive manner and a fund was raised in furtherance of our aims and objects.

In 1962, the 150th anniversary, the Fellowship must grasp this great opportunity to celebrate it in appropriate manner and make the name of Dickens echo round the world. A scheme for this celebration is under consideration now, as we must plan ahead. In the meantime every branch should give thought to this important year, which we must all use to good purpose.

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THE ACCOUNTS for the year were next presented by the Hon. Treasurer, who summarised the happy financial position they revealed. They are found, in full, in another part of this issue.

THE ELECTION of the existing Vice Presidents followed, and afterwards that of the Hon. Secretary, Mr. John Greaves, the Hon. Treasurer, Mr. W. A. MacGregor, and the Hon. Editor of *The Dickensian*, Mr. Leslie C. Staples. Proposing the election of the three latter gentlemen, Mr. Bomans of Haarlem, aided and abetted by his colleagues, Messrs. Marius and Joseph Beek, staged a highly amusing and greatly appreciated tribute to their services.

THE GAD'S HILL CHÂLET appeal was explained by Mr. Greaves, the later development of which is presented on another page.

THE DICKENSIAN was briefly dealt with by the Editor, who expressed his deep satisfaction and gratitude to " The Friends of THE DICKENSIAN." which now rendered the magazine solvent, assisted by the sale of back-numbers organised with her accustomed efficiency by Miss Minards. " Friends " were besought to continue their individual support.

CONFERENCE, 1961; an invitation to Liverpool, voiced by Mrs. E. F. Smith who outlined the plans as far as they had progressed, and that for 1962, the first to be held in America, at Boston, Mass., was dealt with by Mr. Greaves. Plans were already crystalising and forty members had already definitely signified their intention of going. It was confidently expected that many more would travel to Boston from other American and Canadian Branches.

BOOK FOR STUDY for the season 1961/62 was to be *Bleak House*. That for 1960/61, *David Copperfield*, having been decided by last year's Conference.

N.W. REGIONAL GROUP of Branches was most favourably reported upon by Mrs. George Mackrell of Manchester.

A NEW BRANCH, it was reported, is in course of formation at Evanston, Illinois, U.S.A. of which details are expected later.

THE CHAIRMAN received a hearty vote of thanks for her admirable conduct of the meeting, on the invitation of Mr. Leo Mason in a warmly appreciative speech. Mrs. Major briefly replied.

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THE PARKS AND GARDENS of Southend were toured during the afternoon by a fleet of omnibuses, which gave members an opportunity of seeing the fine floral displays of which the town is so justly proud.

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THE CONFERENCE DINNER

Saturday Evening saw the Conference Dinner at Garon's Banquetting Hall, which was beautifully decorated with flowers by the Parks Committee.

After the loyal toast had been honoured, proposed by the Chairman, A. G. Pook, Esq., President of the Southend Branch, the toast of the evening, *The Immortal Memory of Charles Dickens*, was proposed by Sir Compton Mackenzie, Past President. During his speech he said:

It is a little difficult, I think you will agree with me, to say anything new about Charles Dickens. There are two figures in this island of ours about whom it is extremely difficult to say anything new on these occasions; one is Charles Dickens and the other is Robert Burns, and I think I have really said all I could say about both. What I would like to do tonight is to suggest to you how few people there are left who can remember even the edge of Dickens's world of once-upon-a-time.

I had particular experiences of it as a child, as I had an old nurse, very like Paul Dombey's nurse; my people were away and I didn't realise at the time that she was very fond of gin, and in order to indulge she used to send me out for walks in Kensington at the age of about five or six and I used to go for solitary walks and meet the most extraordinary people on the way. There was an old gentleman, who wasn't so old if it comes to that, with a completely flat nose, clothed in a mole-skin suit covered in white rats and white mice which he was selling. And there were terrible cripples and beggars in those days. When I hear people talk about the Welfare State and groan about what a frightful thing it is, I would like them to have lived and remembered the eighties even of the last century—after all Dickens's time was not much before the eighties—and what one saw in the way of misery.

You would see a fellow in a thin, torn shirt, pale face, hardly really holding his clothes together, who would run behind your four-wheel cab the whole way from Liverpool Street to Kensington to earn at the end, a shilling to carry the trunks to the top of three- or four-storied houses. You used to see gypsies, and I have even seen in Kensington (and very frightened I was by it too) Jacks-in-the-Green. That was in 1886 and I don't think they have been often seen since. They were the sweeps on May Day,

celebrating their great feast and they used to go about in cages of green. It is an extraordinary thought if you look at Kensington today, that this could still have been going on in 1886.

That kind of life was going on in Dickens's day and when people talk about " caricatures ", it simply means that they haven't met these people. I have met some quite Dickensian figures even in my time. Let me give you one story which, if Dickens had told it, they would have said " This is just a caricature."

I was travelling not so long ago really, 1909, on the Cornish Riviera Express and I was sitting and reading the paper and a little man with a chin next to me, nudged me and said, " Do you ever do any boxing ?" and I said " Well yes, I used to box when I was at school, yes " and he said " You wouldn't like to come out in the corridor and do a bit of boxing now ? Would you ?" and I said " I think the other people in the carriage might think it rather extraordinary if we went out there." " I will show you a lot of good tricks, you know, I am pretty handy with my fives." I said " I am sure you are." He said " My wife boxes too !" And there opposite me was a lady to whom he said " Open your bodice dear " and there was a steel breast plate. " You know what she wears that for ?" and I said " No, I really don't . . ." " If any man looks at her in a train and insults her, she hits him and he can't hit her back and hurt her."

I don't believe that kind of thing happens today. I will tell you another story of the same kind, again a Dickensian story—I was going down from Glasgow, January 1901, just before Queen Victoria died. There were no corridors in those days and as there had been several murders in trains recently, I was very depressed to see a man with a wall eye sitting opposite looking at me. After a time he said to me " Young man, I have been watching you ". I said " Have you ?" " I have been watching your soul—it has been fluttering round this carriage and it has just fluttered out of the window like a butterfly—You're an Atheist". I said " I am not an Atheist ". " Oh, yes you are, you have got the same expression in your eyes as a brother of mine's got and he is an Atheist ". I said " I am not an Atheist ". " Well I would like you to meet my brother—where are we ? Oh, Preston—my brother lives at Wigan, I will send him a telegram and he can come along to the station, I would like you to see him—I would like you to see the expression in his eyes ". Well of course, the train didn't stop at Wigan, the next stop being Crewe; but as we went surging through it on a wet Saturday night there was a melancholy fellow in a mackintosh standing all alone on Wigan station. " Oh," he said " We aren't going to stop here, what a pity, never mind lad,—there's my brother, look there he is ! there's an Atheist ! Can you you see the expression in his eyes ?"

Well there again, these things don't happen to me today.

My grandmother played in Dickens's amateur company. When she married my grandfather she gave up the stage, but she used to act with Dickens whom I always remember being spoken of as " Mr. Dickens " and it is therefore very near to me. She used to talk to me about him and what a good actor he was. I think it is

very significant that he never wrote plays, after those early attempts. Paradox as it may seem, he was, I think, too good an actor to be a good playwright. In other words, unless he saw each part played to himself and unless the actor played it as *he* heard it, to every tone and every note, it just wasn't a success. But he liked acting, he enjoyed this company he used to take around. My other grandfather, my American grandfather, had the Lyceum and brought out Irving: my mother always used to say: "There was a magnificent Jingle," which I can quite understand and see he might have been, but, at the same time, I should feel, well, I have got my own idea of Jingle just as everybody sitting here has his or her own idea of Jingle, and I doubt if any actor is really going to reproduce it.

Now about Sam Weller: I have heard my father, who as a boy, heard Dickens give his readings and, I remember, was a very good mimic. I have heard him read the Trial Scene from *Pickwick* and so I think that I know, therefore, roughly how Dickens read, subject to imitation in between. Roughly speaking, I know how Dickens read Sam Weller. When you hear this ghastly neo-cockney they do, this curious, utterly wrong cockney, because it is not really London cockney at all—it is a cockney really coming, with all apologies, from Essex. It isn't the old authentic London cockney of once-upon-a-time which said "skellington" instead of "skeleton", which had a perfectly definite way of saying it, which was in fact a dialect. I am quite sure that all lovers of Dickens must always be disappointed by that.

I must tell you this. When I was being tried at the Old Bailey, (at least the trial was heard first at the Guildhall) where I had a State Trial over my behaviour, the Clerk of the Court at Guildhall said to me "As a writer Mr. Mackenzie, you will be interested to hear that your case this morning is being heard in the Old Court of the Guildhall, the Court which Dickens took as a model for the background of Bardell v. Pickwick—and it was exactly the same as it had been." I said "I should think this is the most ridiculous case that has been heard in it since." I thought I rather scored over that.

Well, I wander on with these stories, talking about this very great man, but one thing I would like to say, and take this opportunity of saying, I am so tired of this wretched digging about in the past—what does it matter who had love affairs; the whole point is a writer surely must be judged by what he writes, not by how he lives. When a man has given us as much pleasure as Dickens why should it be done?

No man ever did more or fought harder for the great majority and for the under-privileged and under-fed than Dickens, but no man equally fought harder for individual rights and preservation of the individual personality.

No writer, except Balzac in France, and to some extent Scott in Scotland, produced such a gallery of such an immense number of created characters—created characters, not portraits, but created—spun out of the air; and that is a gift, I think, which every novelist, who really is a creative novelist, should have—he should be able to make any character out of nothing. He used

portraits, and I have no doubt that Dickens from time to time used people as models for what he was doing, but on the whole you can take the hundreds and hundreds of characters in Dickens I would venture to wager that ninety per cent of them were conjured by him out of the air, as Prospero conjured things on that island in *The Tempest.*

Well, it has been a great honour for me tonight and a very great pleasure to make this rather disjointed talk—and I raise my glass and ask you to drink to the Immortal Memory of the greatest entertainer we have ever had, to a man who has given more pleasure and happiness to countless people who recognised in him a common humanity with themselves. Well, he is a hero of mine and I know he is a hero of yours.

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The toast of The Dickens Fellowship was proposed by Philip Charles Dickens, Esq., grandson of the novelist, to which the Hon. Secretary replied.

The Mayor and Corporation of Southend was proposed by Bruce Parkes, Esq., and the Mayor, Alderman A. V. Mussett, replied.

The Guests were proposed by H. Bell, Esq., and a reply given by Miss A. E. Hargreaves of Liverpool, and The Chairman by C. S. Hutchinson, to which Mr. Pook responded.

The Cyril Banyard Trio played during dinner, a feature of which were the small crinolined figures, there was one for every lady present, which had been made specially by Mrs. J. Parkes, the wife of the immediate Past President of the Branch, and added, with the flowers, a gay note to the tables which was greatly appreciated.

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Sunday morning saw the members at St. John's Church for morning service, at which the vicar, the Rev. W. Thomas, M.A. preached the sermon.

In the evening members gathered again at the Palace, the guests of the branch, members of which contributed to the programme of musical and dramatic recitals. To this were added fine colour films, taken by a Haarlem member, of the conference at Amsterdam and Dickensian scenes in England. At the conclusion, Mr. Greaves voiced the thanks of the Fellowship, and in particular those attending this Conference for the welcome that had been extended to us by the town and by the Branch. He referred especially to the Conference Secretary, Mrs. W. G. Pook, to her husband, the President, and to all who had worked so arduously and so successfully to ensure the notable success that had been achieved in such full measure.

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Monday was spent at Cambridge whither members were conveyed in motor coaches, halting at the beautiful church and village of Thaxted on the way. After lunch, the party divided into small groups and, each led by a guide, a tour of the principal colleges was much enjoyed. The return journey was made after tea, and the 1960 Conference was over. L.C.S.

OLIVER!
DICKENS TO MUSIC

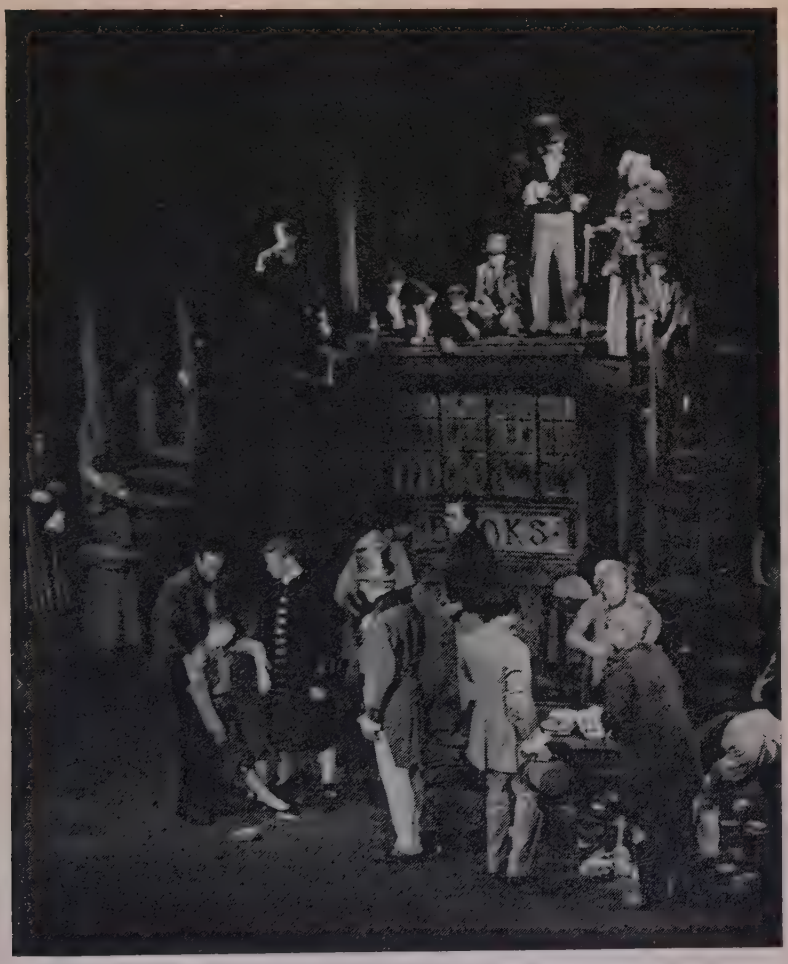
Oliver Twist has always been popular upon the stage, its strong story being eminently suited to dramatic adaptation throughout the long period of the popularity of melodrama. It was frequently in the bill at those houses whose staple fare was melodrama. This lasted until our own day: Sir Ralph Richardson as a youth played Bill Sikes, Dame Sybil Thorndike played Nancy at the Old Vic. Fifty years ago Sir Herbert Tree produced a version at His Majesty's Theatre which is not likely ever to be excelled, having the advantage of a celebrated and perfectly suited cast which no one who saw it is likely to forget. That kind of production is no more, presumably never to return, but Oliver has not therefore to be banished the stage. The new genre, the " Musical " originating in America, has swept like a tornado through Broadway and the West End, killing stone-dead the one-time apparently unconquerable musical comedy, which now lies buried along with Variety. In seeking themes in established favourites, it has hit on *Oliver Twist*, and the result is what is known as a smash hit.

This all-British production is a resounding success judged by any standards. Readers of this magazine will want to ask: " But is it Dickens ? " Astonishingly the answer is an emphatic affirmative. True the accent is on youth. The Fagin, Sikes, and 'Nancy are all younger than we have been accustomed to see them on the stage, but nothing is lost by that, and certainly the book not thereby falsified. A great deal of the novel has been included, and nothing added that is not found there, except the capital songs and music of the talented adapter, Lionel Bart. These arise naturally out of the action and are entirely in character: some are quite brilliant, Fagin's two principal songs, for instance, and brilliantly are they sung. There are the usual harmless telescopings in the plot, but the story and the characters are lifted straight from the novel, although, as becomes a theme for the lighter kind of entertainment, the full tragic impact of some parts of the book is carefully avoided.

Oliver, the Dodger, and the boys are delightful, musically and otherwise, and if our theatrical Dodgers have been rather mature in the past, here we have one who, if anything, is too young. The Fagin of Ron Moody, already referred to, is the " merry old gentleman," to the life, with exactly the right brand of humour, which was totally lacking in the last dramatic Fagin we had. Nancy, Sikes, Bumble, and practically everyone are completely satisfying: several of the smaller parts being quite memorably played. That includes Bullseye who, most unfairly, is not mentioned in the programme.

To speak of the permanent set of Sean Kenny would be a misnomer, for with the brilliant use of a revolving stage it is anything but permanent but changes constantly and totally before one's eyes. This kind of thing has been done before of course, but seldom if ever so spectacularly. Impeccably lit, the stage pictures are as satisfying as anything I can remember, from the

brooding gloom of the opening scene in the workhouse, to that of "The Three Cripples," Hogarthian in its breadth, Rembrandtesque in its lighting. The musical background is admirable in mood;



Oliver !

there lingers in the memory a delightful number consisting of old London street cries.

It is a superb entertainment for Dickensians or anyone else. A triumph for Peter Coe, the director, and all concerned. L.C.S.

Bull Hotel Rochester This famous Pickwickian hostelry, and the foundation of many Dickensian inns in other novels, has changed hands and undergone considerable metamorphosis. It is sad to see the old place stripped of its familiar furniture and fittings which had served as background to the Pickwickians, and survived for 125 years. *Sic transit . . .*

MYSTERIES IN DICKENS

By Frank A. Gibson

MYSTERIES are common enough in Dickens, though there is little of the sustained interest and puzzlement we find in Trollope or Doyle—the canvas is too big. The major mysteries are roughly only four in number. In *Barnaby Rudge,* the mystery of the murdered man turning out to be the murderer is disposed of half-way through the book, leaving the reader to solve the minor mystery not of how Edward Chester returns at the height of the riots to claim his bride but of how on earth he can afford to marry her. The solution is shyly tucked away by Dickens in the very brief explanation given by Joe Willet to his obtuse father—who may be safely relied upon to ask no awkward questions. In *Bleak House* there is the double mystery of who killed Mr. Tulkinghorn and who was Esther's mother; in *Great Expectations* there is the mystery of Pip's fortune; in *Drood* the mystery of what has become of Edwin. In *Little Dorrit* and *Our Mutual Friend* the mysteries tend to become lost in the London fog; which cannot be said of either *Bleak House* or *Great Expectations* —and hence the superior ease with which they are dramatized. For the rest there are minor mysteries, some more interesting than others. We are interested in the personal dilemma of Carker and Edith Dombey, but we are not greatly exercised as to who exactly was Oliver's mother, willing though we are to shed a tear for her at the end of the volume. (Part of the charm of reading Dickens lies in the constant re-discovery of forgotten or only half-remembered mysteries; though this was denied by the distinguished French critic, Professor Chartier, who stoutly maintained that he enjoyed knowing what was coming.) Ostler Hugh, the condemned rioter, is Sir John Chester's son, but we receive the information with equanimity, almost without surprise. We are pained to discover the secret of Nell's grandfather, but we are neither surprised nor disappointed to learn that Smike was Ralph Nickleby's son. Estella's parentage is a shock rather than a mystery. We would also have been shocked rather than surprised to hear that the little marchioness was Sally Brass's offspring; but the author decided to spare us and Swiveller that blow. Even an absentee mother-in-law of such character, though reputedly in the foot-guards, would have been too much.

Master Humphrey became a mystery because Dickens had to explain how it was that the first weekly number of *The Old Curiosity Shop* bore the sub-title " Personal Adventures of Master Humphrey." Quite unexpectedly, he turned out to be the anonymous Single Gentleman, little Nell's great uncle.

The *Battle of Life* and *The Cricket on the Hearth* supply mysteries which must be wholly subservient to the seasonable tone of these Christmas tales. The mystery of Betsy Trotwood's husband, on the other hand, is a real as well as touching surprise.

There is the mystery of the keenly observed Mr. Jingle and Job Trotter. They remain mysteries, alien and unassimilable, provocative of speculation which Dickens never paused to consider. There is more than a suspicion that he was not primarily

interested in minor mysteries such as these. An exception may be made of the bagman's answer to the credulous landlord who wished to know " what these ghosts of mail coaches carry in their bags." " The dead letters, of course," said the bagman—no doubt, thereupon, taking an especially long pull at his " large Dutch pipe." The modern Dutch cigar, excellent though it is, would have been inadequate for the purpose. But *Pickwick* is, on the whole, the one book entirely innocent of any overt or declared mystery.

The grand Dickens mystery, that of the unfinished book, has been largely disposed of in recent years by Mr. Bleifuss's cogent reminder that, whatever Chesterton may have suggested to the contrary (though, after all, G.K.C. said little more to this point than that *Drood* was the one mystery that Dickens succeeded in making entirely mysterious) *Edwin Drood* was still a work by the old, unchangeable Dickens. Once this position is accepted, the solution in broad outline, if not in detail, is easy. Yet, even in detail, it is clear that three men cannot marry two girls. " Gooseberry," whose further identity may be easily guessed, is therefore toppled from the cathedral tower—and Jasper has the opportunity to dree his weird in the condemned cell.

The mystery of the missing five years in *Barnaby Rudge* has been dealt with recently in *The Dickensian*.[1]

One of the most amusing if one of the slightest mysteries in Dickens is in the paper on the old Inns of Court in *The Uncommercial Traveller*. A tenant of chambers is without suitable furniture; he is also shivering with cold, and decides to descend to the cellar to obtain some of his coal stored there. His key accidentally opens the wrong door, revealing a store of furniture such as he is in need of. His mind dwells upon a table he has glimpsed in the dust-laden pile, and he decides to borrow it. Gradually, night after night, he transfers piece after piece of furniture—no doubt left there by some dead tenant—until his rooms are furnished. Then one night there is a knock at the door. A strangely garbed man stands there, opens his mouth as if to make some enquiry but pauses and stares. Entering, he examines one piece of furniture after another, whispering repeatedly but very audibly: " Mine ! " The panic-stricken tenant suggests that he might sit down and have a little—he was going to say " friendly talk," but the stranger intervenes with: " Drink, by all means "; and the amendment is accepted. A decanter of gin is placed upon the table (this story really should go into one of the Christmas numbers) and the tenant, having busied himself with glasses and warm water, returns to find that the visitor has already drunk half the gin. Thereafter he sits thoughtfully drinking glass after glass of " gin-and-warm " until the decanter is empty, whereupon he rises, remarking, " God bless you ! " and " How's your wife ? " The tenant, who is unmarried, replies: " Rather worried, poor soul, but otherwise well." An appointment is made for the next day to discuss matters, and the strange visitor departs, falling several times on his way down the stairs, and—is never heard of again.

[1] 'The Love-interest in *Barnaby Rudge*,' Jan, 1958.

Dickens, more or less, leaves the mystery there, not troubling to suggest "Chercher la femme." There were, of course, "laundresses" . . . And the midnight and shabby visitor was " stiff with gin " when he arrived.

The most remarkable minor mystery of all was given up entirely by Dickens, but it may be understood nowadays in the light of his impeccable description. It may be studied in the *Uncommercial* paper entitled " Travelling Abroad." The gesture of " the little warrior," of his two companions, and of the " huge, bearded sapper " provides the key; incomprehensible to Victorian England in general; and to generous-hearted, matchless reporter Dickens himself merely " an idle trifle of a vaudeville."

It is an oddity of the mystery of *Little Dorrit* that, long as the reader has to wait for the solution (until Chapter XXX in fact), he discovers it before the person most intimately concerned, Arthur Clennam, who has to wait still longer. The dramatic final moments of the book reveal a successful feminine plot by Mrs. Clennam and the angelic Little Dorrit to keep from him the awful fact that the former is not his mother. (There may have been, therefore, a trifling error in *that* marriage register (not to mention any later certificates)—" Little Dorrit's glad secret," it might be called.)

The matter of Mrs. Clennam's suppression of the codicil giving Arthur's real mother a substantial legacy, and another in reversion to Little Dorrit, also needed to be concealed—and finally.

The late Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch confessed that, often as he had read *Little Dorrit*, he would be " gravelled " if asked to say just what was the secret of the old house, or what Miss Wade and Tattycoram had to do with the story. Yet Sir Arthur had a very clear idea of what he called " the trick of the masked battery " repeatedly used by Dickens; betrayal by a supposed confederate — in this case, most movingly, Tattycoram, who follows hot on Mr. Meagles's heels with the missing black box, thus deserting her dissembling patron, Miss Wade, and returning happily to her former and still loved friends at Twickenham; with the happiest results, too, in the winding up of the Clennam mystery.

On the whole, Clennam seems to have exemplified in highly original if not unprecedented form the dictum that in given circumstances ignorance is bliss. " In time to come he should know all that was of import to himself " [i.e. the secret of his birth]; " but he should never know what concerned her only." [the legacy]

Little Dorrit, therefore, behaves incomparably better than Thomas Hardy's school-mistress heroine, who successfully conceals from her husband *all* knowledge of certain earlier events.

At the Abbey The Fellowship held the customary ceremony at Dickens's graveside in Westminster Abbey on the eve of the 90th anniversary of his death. Canon E. F. Carpenter presided, and the wreath was laid by Mr. F. T. Cross, President of the Brisbane Branch (Australia).

A POSTSCRIPT ON PIRATES

By N. C. Peyrouton

FROM a slim packet of letters and memoranda which I had recently the good fortune to acquire I have been able to partially reconstruct a hitherto neglected chapter in the history of Dickens's experiences with literary pickpockets. I am especially indebted to C. A. McCallam, Chief Librarian, the Public Library of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia, without whose assistance this research would have been less complete.

It was the spring of 1851. Seven years had passed since Dickens and Talfourd had done battle with the *Carol* and *Chuzzlewit* plagiarists. Macready had lately retired to a cottage in Dorsetshire. Dickens was dividing his time between visiting with his old friend there and vacationing with his own family at Broadstairs. As usual, mail was forwarded regularly from Devonshire Terrace so that Dickens received promptly the *present* which elicited the acknowledgement printed (for the first time) below:

> Mr. Charles Dickens presents his compliments to Dr. Theophilus Thompson and begs (on his return from a short absence in Dorsetshire) to thank Dr. Thompson for the Australasian, which is in all respects a most creditable production of that distant Press. Mr. Dickens would think it a more encouraging sign of the progress of the Colony, if its literature were original, or honestly purchased, rather than pirated—but he hopes in all good humour that it will be, in the good time that is coming—at some indefinite period. The American example in this particular is not a good one.
>
> Broadstairs, Kent.
> Twenty Seventh June 1851

Considering all that Dickens had suffered from pirates, at home and abroad, this rebuke is mild indeed. There can be little doubt that England's premier novelist still felt very strongly about this kind of activity and that the circumspect tone of the letter is due solely to his realisation that Dr. Thompson's[1] motivation in acting as an agent for the Editor of *The Australasian* was both noble and disinterested.

The Editor, himself, made a transparently idealistic appeal for support. His long dedication was:

> To All Who would See/Literature and Art in Australia/Flourish in a Degree/Worthy of the Intelligence and Spirit of Her People,/And Of/the High Destinies of the Anglo-Norman Race,/ is dedicated/the First Number of the Australasian by the Editor.

He continued in this vein into the preface of the first number (October, 1850):

> . . . It will be the aim of the Australasian to furnish to the upper classes of colonists in the Australasian group a periodic

[1] Dr. Theophilus Thompson (1807-1860) enjoyed a distinguished career in medicine. A sketch of his life appears in DNB. *The Lancet* (Sept. 15th, 1860) paid tribute to his devotion to the principles of free discussion and a free press; they noted also that "Dr. Thompson's intellectual habits were carefully formed, and his discriminating taste in literature and composition told most favorably on his own style as a writer."

supply of mental aliment, drawn fresh from the fountain head of English Literature.

Objects: 1st To introduce to the Anglo-Australian Public the most remarkable of recent English Publications. 2nd To make its readers acquainted with the opinions and arguments of those who move the lever of public opinion at home on the popular questions of the day. 3rd To enable them in some degree to keep pace with the onward march of science, and the progress of industrial and aesthetic art.

Certainly he was anxious to solicit the support and sympathy of the professionals in England.

George Henry Wathen, Editor of *The Australasian*, appears to have been a man of several talents. He was variously an Egyptologist, geologist, mining engineer, author, editor, and, finally, world traveller.[1] But despite his superabundance of competencies, Wathen does not appear to have been long associated with the magazine: the first series consisted of but four numbers (of which there are single copies of the first three in the British Museum Library) and contemporary references to the magazine do not mention his name.[2]

Wathen sent to Dr. Thompson a list of the names of those to receive complimentary copies of Numbers 1 and 2, Dickens was to receive only the second number—as were the Editors of the *Dublin University Magazine* and the *Athenaeum*—while copies of both numbers were to go to the Editors of the *Quarterly Review*, the *Edinburgh Review*, and *Fraser's Magazine*. Accompanying the list is a short memorandum:

> I have sent all the copies I can get at Geelong, and still have been obliged to modify my List from want of more—Excuse the trouble I am giving you—and if you think proper, alter my List—The Magazine promises to be successful sic.

It is interesting to note that in these first two numbers Wathen has " borrowed " respectively from the *Athenaeum* two articles, from *Blackwood's* one, from the *Dublin University* four, from *Fraser's* six, from *Household Words* three (all in Number 2)[3], from *Punch* one, and from the *Quarterly Review* two. There are but five original contributions to set against these.

Preserved in my packet, with Dickens's letter and Wathen's memorandum, are the two very different responses of publisher

[1] There is a dearth of biographical data on Wathen. C. A. McCallam (see foreword) assures me that no record of his arrival in Melbourne can be traced. But from information supplied by him and by the Geological Society of London, Burlington House, I have been able to piece together a bare skeleton account of his activities in the 'fifties. Wathen arrived in Australia sometime in 1850 [after having spent sometime in Egypt (1839—?1842)] from England. He made a tour of the Western Port district early in 1850 and discovered coal in the area. This trip and the discovery was his subject in the *Argus* newspaper, March 9th, 1850, and was probably the genesis of an article by him which appeared in *Papers of the Royal Society of Van Dieman's Land* entitled " On the Coal Measures along the Coast between Western Port and Cape Liptrap, in the Colony of Port Philip " (Vol. I, 1851). He set up for a time as a Mining Engineer at Melbourne and at New Town. While still in Australia he contributed " On the Gold Fields of Victoria or Port Philip " to the *Quarterly Journal of the Geological Society* (Vol. IX, 1853) and wrote a book, *The Golden Colony; or Victoria in* 1854. He was elected a Fellow of the Geological Society of London on April 4th, 1855, and as late as 1902 he appears in their membership with his address as Natal, South Africa. He failed thereafter to keep in touch with the Society and was presumed dead in 1920. His work as an Egyptologist is cited in Allibone's *Dictionary*; *Arts, Antiquities, and Chronology of Ancient Egypt; from Personal Observation in* 1839, London, 1843. It was praised as most entertaining but criticised as having added no new knowledge.

[2] C. A. McCallum.

[3] " The Old Lady in Threadneedle Street," " The Serf of Pobereze," and " The Mediaeval-Art Mania " [sic].

John Murray of the *Quarterly Review* and Editor William Empson of the *Edinburgh Review*. Like Dickens's they are addressed to Dr. Thompson at 3 Bedford Square.

From Albermarle Street on June 25th Murray wrote:

Sir

I hasten to apprise you that the Australasian-periodical published at Melbourne—is a piratical infringement on my property—& illegal—. I do not wish to be harsh—nor do I attribute the infringement's [sic] to anything but ignorance of the real nature of literary property on the part of Mr. Wathen & others connected with the Australian [sic]— For this reason I write to you myself, instead of sending you a lawyer's letter. But I must beg of you to give me an assurance that you will make Mr. Wathen aware that he has laid himself open to legal proceedings—& that I shall be compelled to have recourse to them unless the republication of articles from the Quarterly Review be entirely stopped for the future, & the sale of those wch are printed be suspended forthwith.

You are probably not aware of the fact that much more than £100,000 has been paid to the various Authors for the copy-right of the articles in the Quarterly—& can imagine that it is unprofitable for me to permit such unauthorized use of my property as is made in the Australian [sic]. I hope to hear from you or to be favored with a call—

I remain Sir
Very faithfully yours
John Murray

From his rooms in the old Hertfordshire Manor House at the East India College, Haileybury,[1] Professor Empson wrote on July 1st:

Mr. Empson presents his compts to Dr. T. Thompson & will be much obliged to him to return his best thanks to Mr. G. H. Wathen for the copies of the two first Nos. of A [sic] "Australasian." Indeed Mr. E. does most heartily wish him success in his bold and farsighted experiment. I will rejoice to hear that he has made a public in the other end of the world to value & promote his labors.

What a picture of the spirit of our times.

The responses of the others who received complimentary copies are not extant but those quoted above are typical of the wide range of reaction to pirates. Dickens's attitude, a more or less philosophic resignation, does not surprise us; John Murray's is characteristic of the man who must pay for what he gets (but one raises his eyebrows at the figure Murray quotes); William Empson's reflects an acceptance of Wathen's preface at face value and is partially explained by the fact that his journal had thus far escaped the scissors.

[1] *Memorials of Old Haileybury College*, various contributors, London, 1894, p. 29.

CHARLES DICKENS COMMEMORATION SERMON

By the Rev. C. E. Bowkett

St. George's (Little Dorrit's) Church, Southwark, May 8th, 1960

FOR the purpose of my address to you to-night, I have engaged myself upon a course of study to try to assess, from the writings of Charles Dickens, his attitude both to the Christian Faith and the Christian Church. It has proved a most fascinating study, though I must confess that my time has been so limited as to allow me to draw only a very sketchy outline and one that would call for far more detailed treatment if it was to be presented as a complete and true picture. I offer it to you only as an idea that might be worth the following as you read and study his works.

Several aspects of his attitude are sufficiently well known to be simply stated.

He was in general extremely hostile to the Roman Church, regarding it as a retrograde step that the hierarchy had been established in this country. On the other extreme he was intensely critical of the Protestants, regarding their general attitude and teaching as humbug and cant.

Towards missionary endeavour, especially that which, inspired by the prudity of Protestant sects, sought to clothe the heathen, depriving him of his innocent nudity, he was bitterly opposed; mainly on the ground that there was so much to be done in this country, that it was an offence to God to offer him missionary work as an alternative to duty at home.

Of the established Church he was impatient and critical, and generally I would say, regarded it as so steeped in privilege, sunk in indifference and incapable of facing the challenge of the implications of the teaching of Christ in the social structure of this country, (as it was developing during the industrial revolution), as to be practically useless for the carrying out the will of God in the world.

This does not mean that he was unaware or unappreciative of many faithful priests up and down the country who gave their lives in the service of the parish to which they had been appointed. Rather that the Church as it existed was incapable of facing the challenge implicit in the changing pattern of social and economic life in the England of his day.

There was danger at one time that he would become completely hostile and extremely sweeping in his denunciations. In one of his *Sketches by Boz*, he writes . . . "A Christmas dinner . . . does more to awaken the sympathies of every member of the party in behalf of his neighbour, and to perpetuate their good feeling during the ensuing year, than half the homilies that have ever been written, by half the Divines that ever lived."

Thus Dickens altered it to read in 1850, prompted perhaps by conviction, but more likely by the caution of his friend Forster, It had stood originally as: " than *all* the homilies that have ever been written, by *all* the Divines that have ever lived."

He was acquainted with various Churches and had a great deal of sympathy at one time with the Unitarian Church, though

whether this was out of friendship with the minister or through sympathy with its teaching and doctrine is difficult to assess.

I must let this suffice so far as the Church as an organisation is concerned. Let us turn now to the teaching of the Christian Faith.

There is ample evidence that he believed in God and accepted the teaching of Christ, especially so far as the social content of that teaching is concerned.

Albeit, his belief in God does seem to be in a God who is very remote from this world of time and space. This may be summed up for us by noting how the divine power functions in *Great Expectations*. Primarily as the supreme judge before whom all social distinctions are as nothing. " The sun was striking in at the great windows of the court, through the glittering drops of rain upon the glass, and it made a broad shaft of light between the two-and-thirty criminals and the Judge, linking both together, and perhaps reminding some among the audience, how both were passing on, with absolute equality, to the greater Judgment that knoweth all things and cannot err."

He expresses a rather nebulous belief in a transcendent God to whom, at death, those who have suffered a sad and lonely life in this world will return for comfort. His attitude is that which is commonly described as " Pie in the Sky." Yet for all this he was absolutely convinced of the Divine plan, that man should live in brotherhood with man. Granted that in many, nay most of his novels, man's stupidity and sin makes this impossible, yet it still remains the goal of human effort. But when we pass on to ask, as was revealed to St. Paul, does God both inspire and aid men in the accomplishment of his purpose, one must presume from his novels that Dickens was ignorant of or disbelieved in what the Church teaches of the power of Grace . . . God the Holy Spirit working within men to establish the purpose of God in the world.

We might even presume to say that it would appear that while Dickens had grasped the idea of the transcendence of God he had completely failed to grasp the truth of his immanence.

Yet in Little Dorrit he reaches one of the peaks of his artistic success in being able to persuade us to accept so completely the mystery of divine goodness incarnate in a human person. But at the same time he tells the story of hopeless imprisonment. He tells of the prison of poverty: Bleeding Heart Yard, of the prison of administration: the Circumlocution Office, of the prison of heredity, and temperament: in Mrs. Clennam and Miss Wade. We are *all* each other's prisoners; and there is no way out, and it is Nobody's Fault. *Nobody's Fault* . . . the original title he chose for *Little Dorrit*.

The more we study his novels the more we are forced to recognise that while we long to get below the surface, and discover what he has to tell us, Dickens does not actually take us below the surface; all that he does is to give us an exhaustive inventory of the surface itself. Did he ever get below? When sufficient isolated parts had been described and their relations discovered, was the truth behind each liberated, or was he himself still searching when he died? In the light of Edwin Drood, I think he was still searching.

I would like in ending to suggest that it might be an immense help to us in attempting to get below the surface if we took some of his other writings, especially his letters and speeches and, comparing the statements he makes in them with the lives of the characters in his novels, try to discover those aspects of life, belief and teaching which may be of interest to us.

May I give you one illustration. How we might be helped in our understanding of Tom all Alone's in *Bleak House*, if we read it in conjunction with his letter to Miss Coutts about his search for a house or site for a house for fallen girls in Bermondsey and his description of the area; together with his speech to the Metropolitian Sanitary Association on May 10th, 1851.

"Give me my first glimpse of heaven through a little of its light and air—give me water—help me to be clean—lighten this heavy atmosphere in which my spirit droops and I become the indifferent and callous creature that you see me— gently and kindly take the the body of my dead relation out of the small room where I grow to be so familiar with the awful change that even its sanctity is lost to me . . . then I'll hear, you know how willingly, of Him whose thoughts were so much with the poor and who had compassion for all human sorrow.

I now propose the toast of a public body without whose efficient aid this preparation so much to be desired, for Christianity at home, cannot be effected."

Dickens had indeed grasped the social implications of the Gospel.

Now we travel in a full circle and come to Christian Aid Week, the situation in which the refugees of the world find themselves to-day which presents to us the same challenge as the conditions produced by the Industrial revolution presented to Dickens in his day. And well may we ask the question—Shall we be as Christian as he in giving of ourselves to sweep away this terrible blot on the record of our day and generation?

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Sir,

Could Dickens have been regarded, in the jargon of psychiatry, as possessing an "anti-parrot complex?" The villain Carker had one of these screeching creatures as his sole companion, another unpleasant character, Mrs. Merdle, has one, and by far the most hurtful accusation hurled at his poor daughter Pleasant, by her father, Rogue Riderhood, is the charge of "poll-parroting"! What do other readers think about this?

DOROTHY BOWHAY,

St. Budeaux, Plymouth.

A DICKENS COMPETITION

A slip occurs in the questions on p. 120 of the May number. Question 12c should read not "Who was the threatened?" but WHO WAS THE THREATENER? Solutions should be received at Dickens House by November 15th.

DICKENS AND THE MAIMED BOY

The Rev. C. J. Whitmore, addressing the 33rd Ragged School Union Annual Meeting of the R.S.U., at Exeter Hall, May 7th, 1877, recalled the days, years previously, when he was keeping a costermongers' school in Castle Street, Saffron Hill, and told this story:

One day a boy came there, and sat down in the free and easy way in which boys are accustomed to do. When I saw him I said, "My boy, what can you do?" "Not much," he replied. I said, "Can you write?" He answered by holding out his two hands, and I then found that he had only one finger left on one of them, and that the other was crushed across the knuckles. The right hand was altogether maimed. I said to him, "My boy, how did that happen?" He replied, "I was assisting at a bookbinder's cutting-machine, and I caught my hand in the knife, and in trying with the other to get it out I caught them both." He added, "I cannot write." "But," I rejoined, "you have your left hand, and can learn to write with that." "Who ever heard of anybody doing that?" he said. He did not know that I was a left-handed man myself. I said, "I can do it." and showed him how it could be done, whereupon he exclaimed, "If you can do it, I can!" A little while after, that boy was writing with his left hand, and, observing that he was looking sorrowful, I said to him, "What is the matter?" He said, "Oh, sir, mother says I must go and do as the others do, and I don't like it!" I said, "Did she mean that you must go and steal—is that it?" He replied, "Well, she did not say that, sir, but she said I must go and do as the others do." "What is that?" I said. The boy replied, "Well, she said, 'You are able to support yourself, and I cannot keep you here;'" adding, "I do not want to do it, I should like to live respectably if I can." I said, "I will go and see your mother." I went and saw the mother, and I said to her, "It is now Wednesday, keep that boy only till Saturday," and she said she would. I went home thinking what I could do to help that poor crippled lad. Just a week before that—I don't know whether any one here will remember it—Charles Dickens had published in *Household Words* an article entitled "Nobody's Child," and I thought to myself, "If that is an imaginary sketch it will be worth while to show the author a real specimen." I wrote to Charles Dickens, saying that if he would like to see "Nobody's Child," I would show him to him. He sent me in reply a very kind letter, in which he said he could not be expected to take up all the "Nobody's" children, but that nevertheless he would see this particular specimen if I would send it to him. Of course I very gladly sent the boy to Devonshire Place, where Mr. Dickens then lived. But when he got up to the house he found it a grander place than he had ever seen before, and so he sat down, like Mordecai at the King's gate, and did not dare to knock at the door. By-and-by Mr. Dickens sent his footman out to fetch him, and he brought him in. The boy said to me afterwards, "Oh, sir, he did put me through a catachism—he asked me everything; but after I had talked three-quarters of an hour he gave me half-a-crown and this letter to take to his

printer." The boy took the letter to the printer, the printer instantly engaged him, and he remained there till, also through Mr. Dickens's kindness, he obtained employment as a telegraph messenger—a post which, so far as I know, he still holds.

From *The Ragged School Union Quarterly Record*, July, 1877.

NOTE. This pleasant anecdote must be inaccurate in some of its details; the Rev. Whitmore was doubtless a veracious man, but his memory was excusably hazy so many years after the event. Dickens left Devonshire Terrace in November, 1851, and *Household Words* up to that date had certainly contained no article entitled or concerning "Nobody's Child". Nor do later numbers of *Household Words* or *All The Year Round* contain any article with just this title (so far as I can discover). Whitmore must have been thinking either of Dickens's "Nobody's Story", contributed to the Christmas number for 1853, or of W. B. Jerrold's article, "Anybody's Child", published on February 4th, 1854. I think it much more likely that the latter was the one which caught Whitmore's attention. Jerrold describes at length the plight and threat of the uncared-for waifs on the London streets. Moreover, Whitmore would surely have remembered and mentioned the fact that it was one of Dickens's famous Christmas effusions which prompted him to seek Dickens's charity, if such had been the case. The Nonesuch edition of the *Letters* contains no correspondence between Dickens and Whitmore, nor have I seen this anecdote recorded elsewhere.

P.A.W.C.

W. MACQUEEN POPE

In the passing, on June 27th, of W. Macqueen Pope, at the age of 72, after a long and distressing illness, London mourns a popular and beloved troubadour, for that he sang of the theatre is a rhetorical but faithful description of his unique work. He had the theatre in his blood, his family having been occupied in it for generations; one of them was playing in Shakespeare's time and one certainly acted with Garrick. His own career began as an actor, although he quickly turned to business-management. Popie as he was affectionately called by all privileged to know him, was a great Dickens lover, and honoured the Fellowship by accepting Vice Presidency. In the years since the last war he had become an increasingly popular figure up and down the country and on the air, with his talks on the theatre in which he freely communicated his own enormous enthusiasm. Again and again he generously gave of his time to entertain the Fellowship in such fashion, and always with supreme success for he endeared himself to his audiences to a remarkable degree. His passion for the theatre is fortunately crystalised in his many books, including his histories of the principal London theatres and those which evoke the already legendary Edwardian era. His style was itself perhaps a little "theatrical," and if he does not rank with the greatest stage historians—his complete accuracy has sometimes been criticised—where else may be found the story of the theatre during the past half century told with such verve, its spirit so sympathetically presented, and its great personalities, all of whom he knew, so faithfully and lovingly recalled. Only a few weeks ago he was telling me that he hoped he would be spared to write just a few more books which he outlined to me with all his old enthusiasm despite his obviously failing health. He was sad that his respected name would no longer appear in the theatre after his death, but he will not be forgotten as long as the stage holds a place in English hearts. His ashes will mingle with those of Ellen Terry, Wycherley, Macklin and many more, at the actor's church, St. Paul's, Covent Garden, where a memorial service was attended by representatives of the Fellowship on July 26th.

L.C.S.

THE DICKENS FELLOWSHIP PLAYERS
in *Dombey and Son*

A highly delighted audience filled the comfortable theatre of the Regent Street Polytechnic, in London, on May 27th last, to witness the Dickens Fellowship Players in what the programme described as *Scenes from Dombey and Son*. Jane Bacon, who adapted the novel, had no need to be so modest on its behalf for, as we have come to expect from her, she produced a sound and comprehensive dramatic version of the book, which stood sturdily on its own feet. A narrator (Dora Bush) was used only at the beginning in order to overcome the insuperable problem of introducing Paul on to the stage.

The production was in the hands of Mrs. Bacon herself, who secured a smoothly running performance, in some dozen scenes.

The task of casting a Dickens novel from a comparatively small society of amateurs is of course very difficult, but it is happily to be reported that while the hits were obvious, the less successful impersonations were few.

Edith Dombey had the benefit of a practised hand in Betty White, who skilfully dealt with this exceedingly difficult character. She was ably supported by a Dombey worthy of her performance, in Albert Regan. Ivy England as Mrs. Chick was notably successful, while Marjorie Belwood as Tox refrained from the over-playing to which the character readily lends itself. We had a masterful Mrs. MacStinger in Betty Watling, and a humanised Mrs. Skewton in Caroline Stuart-Bunning.

The Captain Cuttle of William Varnals, in a splendid make-up, gave enormous pleasure, and Keith Havelock produced a Toots of really outstanding quality. He had in support an excellent Susan in Madeline Nicholson. To these must be added a restrained Carker in John Jarvis, and the sympathetic lovers, Florence and Walter, of Valerie Rhodes and Leonard White. Perhaps Vernon Fielder as Major Bagstock had the most difficult task of all, into which he threw all that he had.

Vincent Sanders cleverly doubling Chick and Bunsby, Freda Regan as Richards, and Gladys McCaffery and Betty Minns as well differentiated maids, completed the cast. Dora Bush and Joe McLeish contributed a song, and Evelyn Langler was at the piano. Finally, the highly efficient stage-management was in the hands of Doris Day. The costumes, better than ever, were provided by the Dickens Fellowship Costume Department.

The Field Lane Institute, and St. Saviours Home, Seaford, benefited by £38. L.C.S.

RECENT DICKENSIANA

Dickens. Excerpt from the new British Museum Library Catalogue. Wrappers, folio, 72 pp., 14*s*.

"The Hero's Guilt: the Case of *Great Expectations*," Julian Moynahan, *Essays in Criticism*, January.

"The Other Dickens," F. W. Dupée. (The introduction to a forthcoming *Selected Letters of Dickens*). Partisan Review, Winter.

'Bleak House and Dickens's *Household Narrative*," P. A. W. Collins. *Nineteenth Century Fiction*, March.

THE DICKENS FELLOWSHIP.

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31ST DECEMBER, 1959.

1958.	LIABILITIES.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
£			
575	Life Membership Fund		574 17 6
833	Special Reserve		833 7 6
	Costume Department Fund—		
	Balance as at 31st December, 1958	156 15 4	
	Add: Excess of Income over Expenditure for year	4 9 1	
157			161 4 5
12	Unexpired Balance of Receipts for Charitable Purposes		11 7 3
	General Purposes Fund—		
	As at 31st December, 1958	326 18 11	
	Add: Sundry Income less Payments from Functions, Sale of Badges, &c., during year	100 11 0	
327			427 9 11
	Income and Expenditure Account—		
	Balance as at 31st December, 1958	1341 4 9	
	Add: Transfer "The Dickensian" 1958 loss reimbursed	81 14 0	
		1422 18 9	
1341	*Add* Excess of Income over Expenditure for year	168 6 9	
			1591 5 6
115	Sundry Creditors		89 0 8
1002	Conference Account		81 10 5
£4362			£3770 3 2

1958.	ASSETS.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
£	Life Membership Fund Investment, at cost—		
575	£549 16*s.* 1*d.* 4% Consolidated Stock (Market Value 31st December, 1959, £404 2*s.* 2*d.*)		574 17 3
	Investment of Special Donation, at cost—		
105	£118 5*s.* 10*d.* 4% Consolidated Stock (Market Value, 31st December, 1959, £86 18*s.* 11*d.*)		105 0 0
	Investment at cost		
550	£576 9*s.* 3*d.* British Gas 3½% Guaranteed Stock 1969/71 (Market Value 31st December, 1959, £501 10*s.* 5*d.*)		550 0 0
	Library Pictures and Furniture (including items exhibited in The Dickens House and Library)	13 10 0	
	Less Depreciation	1 10 0	
16			12 0 0
	The Tyrrell Collection of Photographic Negatives,		
75	at cost	75 0 0	
	Less: Depreciation	10 0 0	
			65 0 0
	Costume Department—		
	Costumes at Nominal Value	100 0 0	
	Cash in Hands of Assistant Secretary as at 31st December, 1959	61 4 5	
157			161 4 5
	The Dickens House—		
191	Current Account		198 5 6
	The Dickensian—		
	Current Account	147 16 8	
	Add: Transfer Income and Expenditure Account re 1958 Loss	81 14 0	
51			229 10 8
55	Stock of "Life of Dickens"		47 16 0
54	Stock of Christmas Cards		48 14 1
7	Stock of Badges in hand		— — —
1	Amounts Paid in Advance, etc.		— — —
	Balance at Bankers		
1250	Deposit Account	1250 0 0	
1275	Current Account	526 15 1	
—	Cash in Hand	1 0 2	
			1777 15 3
£4362			£3770 3 2

We have examined the above Balance Sheet with the books and vouchers of The Dickens Fellowship and certify the same to be in accordance therewith.
We have also verified the Investments.

3 York Street, Manchester 2.
19*th May*, 1960.

MORRIS, GREGORY & CO.,
Chartered Accountants,
Hon. Auditors.

THE DICKENS FELLOWSHIP

Income and Expenditure Account for the Year ended 31st December, 1959.

1958.		Expenditure.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
£	£			
	65	To Rent (including Insurance, Lighting and Heating) and Rates	65 0 0	
792		„ Salaries £860 0 0		
396		*Less* Contributions by Dickens House 430 0 0		
	396		430 0 0	
	49	„ Printing and Stationery	46 1 1	
	119	„ General Expenses and Postages	121 9 2	
	629		662 10 3	
259		*Less* Amount charged to *The Dickensian* £275 12 8		
50		Amount charged to Costume Department ... 50 0 0		
	309		325 12 8	
	320			336 17 7
	126	„ *The Dickensian* supplied to Headquarters' Members and Branch Secretaries		127 16 0
	50	„ Meetings		35 12 0
	11	„ Contributions to Charitable Purposes Account		11 2 10
	2	„ Depreciation: Library Pictures and Furniture 1 10 0		
	–	Tyrrell Negatives... ... ... 10 0 0		
				11 10 0
77		Premium on Miss D. L. Minard's Deferred Annuity 76 19 0		
51		*Less* Contributed by Dickens House 51 6 0		
	26			25 13 0
	115	„ Balance being Excess of Income over Expenditure ...		168 6 9
	£650			£716 18 2

1958.	Income.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
£			
	By Subscriptions—		
490	Headquarters' Members	506 16 1	
74	Branches...	95 0 8	
13	„ Interest on Investment of Life Membership Fund, less tax	13 1 2	
			614 17 11
11	„ Interest on Investment, *less* Tax		11 19 8
20	„ Interest on Deposit Account (Gross)		27 19 7
29	„ Profit on Sales of "Life of Dickens"		34 11 0
13	„ Profit on Sales of Christmas Cards		27 10 0
£650			£716 18 2

THE DICKENS HOUSE

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31ST DECEMBER, 1959.

1958.	LIABILITIES.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
£	The Dickens Fellowship—		
190	Current Account		138 5 6
157	Sundry Creditors and Accrued Charges		130 2 7
103	Adelaide H. Garland Memorial Gift		102 19 9
10268	Walter Dexter Memorial Fund		10267 10 3
—	Hope Wickes Legacy Fund		658 6 2
	Library Reserve—		
26	As at 31st December, 1958		26 9 1
	Balance—		
	As at 31st December, 1958 .. .. .. 6937 15 8		
	Add Excess of Income over Expenditure for year to date 335 15 9		
6938			7273 11 5
£17682			£18657 4 9

1958.	ASSETS.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
£	Freehold Property—		
5176	Nos. 48 and 49 Doughty Street, at cost at 31st December, 1958		5175 13 2
	Furniture and Fittings, at cost, less depreciation at 31st December, 1958 .. .. 277 0 0		
	Additions during year 139 17 3		
	416 17 3		
277	*Less* Depreciation for Year 18 17 3		398 0 0
	Library and Museum, at cost—		
308	As at 31st December, 1958 .. .. .. 308 7 10		
	Addition during year 2 4 6		
			310 12 4
	Adelaide H. Garland Memorial Gift Investment—		
103	£188 5*s.* 9*d.* 2½% Consolidated Stock, at cost .. .. .. (Market Value 31st December, 1959, £94 2*s.* 10*d.*)		102 19 9
	Walter Dexter Memorial Fund Investments, at cost—		
	£696 2*s.* 4*d.* 2½% Consolidated Stock .. 500 0 0		
	£1792 14*s.* 3¼% Commonwealth of Australia Stock 1965/69 .. .. 2000 0 0		
	£530 8*s.* 3½% Conversion Stock 500 0 0		
	£1000 4½% Defence Bonds (Conversion Issue) 1000 0 0		
	£1128 15*s.* 5*d.* 4% Consolidated Stock .. 1000 0 0		
	£486 16*s* 4*d.* British Electricity 3% Guaranteed Stock 1968/73 .. .. 500 0 0		
	£527 13*s.* 4*d.* 3½% War Stock 500 0 0		
	£600 9*s.* 8*d.* British Gas 3% Guaranteed Stock 1990/95 .. .. 500 0 0		
	£2363 11*s.* 4*d.* 3% Savings Bonds 1965/75 .. 2000 0 0		
	£820 7*s.* 7*d.* 3½% Treasury Stock 1977/80 .. 757 10 3		
	£1215 11*s.* 9*d.* British Transport 3% Gtd. Stock 1978/88 .. .. 1000 0 0		
	(Market Value 31st December, 1959, £8460 10*s.* 10*d.*) 10257 10 3		
	Cash at Bank 10 0 0		
10268			10267 10 3
	Deposit Account—Westminster Bank Ltd.		
750	General Account 741 13 10		
—	re Hope Wickes Legacy 658 6 2		
			1400 0 0
25	Payments in Advance		42 19 3
	Stock of Pictures, Post Cards, etc—		
324	Certified by Hon. Treasurer		302 6 2
50	*The Dickensian*—Current Account		42 9 10
401	Cash at Bank and in hand		614 14 0
£17682			£18657 4 9

We have examined the above Balance Sheet with the books and vouchers of The Dickens House and certify it to be in accordance therewith. We

THE DICKENS HOUSE

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER, 1959.

1958.	EXPENDITURE	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
£	To General Expenses—		
21	Stationery and Postages	40 10 2	
145	Petty Cash Sundry Expenses and Cleaning ...	118 2 11	
12	Telephone	11 5 9	
88	Caretaking Expenses	123 7 0	
396	Salaries	430 0 0	
662			723 5 10
9	,, Water Rates	9 9 10	
46	,, Insurance	46 4 2	
214	,, Lighting and Heating	118 13 5	
269		174 7 5	
15	*Less* Contributions from Dickens Fellowship	15 0 0	
254			159 7 5
264	,, Repairs to Building		454 19 3
13	,, Maintenance of Furniture and Fittings		5 19 9
14	,, Depreciation of Furniture and Fittings		18 17 3
51	,, Contribution to Miss D. L. Minard's Deferred Annuity ...		51 6 0
128	,, Excess of Income over Expenditure carried to Balance Sheet...		335 15 9
£1386			£1749 11 3

1958.	INCOME	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
£	By Annual Subscriptions received during the year—		
19	Friends of Dickens House		12 1 0
322	,, Admission Fees		347 16 6
3	,, Donations		6 12 6
	,, Rents—		
300	No. 49 Doughty Street	625 0 0	
35	*The Dickensian*	35 0 0	
50	The Dickens Fellowship	50 0 0	
			710 0 0
	,, Interest (Gross)—		
5	Adelaide H. Garland Memorial Gift Investment	4 14 0	
372	Walter Dexter Memorial Fund Investments	371 10 6	
—	Hope Wickes Legacy Fund—Bank Interest	3 1 9	
			379 6 3
25	,, Grant from London County Council		25 0 0
233	,, Profit on Sales		253 16 3
1	,, Refund of Income Tax		– – –
21	,, Interest on Deposit Account (General)		14 18 9
£1386			£1749 11 3

THE DICKENSIAN"

PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST DECEMBER, 1959

1958. £		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	1958. £		£ s. d.	£ s. d.
53	To Stock of Bound Volumes on Hand 31st December, 1958 ..		60 7 6	656	By Sales, including Subscriptions		648 7 8
18	,, Purchases	.. ..	— — —	268	,, Sales—Back Numbers		304 5 5
484	,, Printing	502 17 0		68	,, Advertising Receipts		30 0 0
46	,, Blocks	21 15 9		8	,, Interest on Deposit Account		9 19 11
57	,, Binding	45 12 8		60	,, Stock of Bound Volumes on Hand, 31st December, 1959 ..		73 10 0
69	,, Postages on Magazine	66 7 6		82	,, Loss for Year, carried down		47 17 2
			636 12 11				
35	,, Rent	35 0 0					
259	,, Publishing and Clerical Assistance	275 12 8					
34	,, Stationery	23 14 9					
76	,, Sundry Postages and General Expenses ..	71 9 11					
11	,, Audit Fee	10 10 0					
			416 7 4				
–	,, Discounts	.. ..	– 12 5				
£1142			£1114 0 2	£1142			£1114 0 2
£82	To Loss for year, brought down		47 17 2	£82	By Transfer from Reserve		47 17 2

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31ST DECEMBER, 1959

1958. £	LIABILITIES.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	1958. £	ASSETS.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
	CREDITORS:				CASH AT BANK AND IN HAND		
50	The Dickens House	42 9 10			Deposit Account	500 0 0	
4	Fellowship Branches	6 4 7		1173	Current Account and in Hand	809 2 2	
110	Sundry	64 3 8					1309 2 2
			112 18 1		DEBTORS—		
	RESERVE as at 31st December, 1958	940 19 5			Fellowship Branches	53 12 7	
	Less: Transfer to The Dickens Fellowship against the loss for 1958	81 14 0			Sundry	23 15 1	
		859 5 5				77 7 8	
	Add Donations received during year (from Friends of *The Dickensian*)	104 14 10			*Less* Reserve for Returns	5 0 0	
		964 0 3		100			72 7 8
	Less: Transfer to Profit and Loss Account—Loss 1959	47 17 2			STOCK OF BOUND VOLUMES ON HAND—		
941			916 3 1	60	As certified by the Hon. Treasurer		73 10 0
177	SUBSCRIPTIONS RECEIVED IN ADVANCE	.. ..	196 8 0				
	THE DICKENS FELLOWSHIP—						
	Current Account	147 16 8					
	Add: Transfer from Reserve against the loss for 1958	81 14 0					
51			229 10 8				
£1333			£1454 19 10	£1333			£1454 19 10

We have examined the above Balance Sheet and Profit and Loss Account with the Books and Vouchers of the Dickens Fellowship and certify them to be correct.

CHANGE IN BRANCH SECRETARIES

Retiring		*New*
Mr. G. Rowe	Adelaide	Mrs. Eva E. White
Mrs. R. P. Burrows	Brisbane	Mr. Thos. Simpson.
Mrs. E. Griffiths	Calif. Pickwick Club	Miss M. Cassidy
Mrs. T. Earle	Worcester	Mrs. Edgar R. Walker

OBITUARY

A. E. Caddick of Christchurch, N.Z., Percy Simmons of Headquarters, Miss S. J. Parry and Mrs. C. Tucker of Manchester.

FRIENDS OF " THE DICKENSIAN "

Blackburn Branch £1 11*s.* 6*d.* Haarlem Branch 10*s.*

CHRISTMAS CARDS FROM THE DICKENS HOUSE

New Designs

1. The Dance at Trotty Veck's	4/– dozen
2. Mr. Pickwick on the Ice	6/– dozen
3. Tiny Tim	6/– dozen
4. Mr. Micawber	6/– dozen
5. Coach and Quotation	6/– dozen
6. Fezziwig's Ball	4/– dozen
7. Christmas at Dingley Dell	4/6 dozen
8. Scrooge (*Silhouette*)	4/– dozen
9. Quotation Cards	3/– dozen

Postage 6d. dozen extra

The Dickens Fellowship

LONDON MEETINGS

Sept. Sat. 17th. Ramble "Marylebone." Conducted by Mrs. G. Major. Meet: All Souls Church, Langham Place, 2-15 p.m.

Oct. Th. 6th. *The Heroes and Heroines of Dickens.* Mr. Angus Wilson. *Chairman:* Mrs. Jane Bacon.

Sat. 8th. Visit: St. Luke's and Royal Hospital. Mr. T. V. Brewer. Meet London Gate of Royal Hospital at 2-15 p.m.

Nov. Sat. 12th. Visit: Forster and other collections, Victoria and Albert Museum. Meet Main Entrance, 2-15 p.m.

Wed. 16th. *Illustration.* Mr. Edward Ardizzone. Chairman: Mr. F. E. Banbery.

Dec. Mon. 12th. *A Novelist from the Inside.* Dr. Lionel Stevenson. Chairman: Mr. Graham Storey.

Fri. 16th. Christmas Supper and Party. Fuller's Stewart Restaurant, Victoria. Tickets from Dickens House, 20*s.*

Meetings, unless otherwise stated, are held at Swedenborg Hall, 20-22 Bloomsbury Way, W.C.1, at 7 p.m., doors open at 6-30 p.m. Admission to Lectures and Rambles by Membership card. Friends may be introduced at a charge of 2*s.* 6*d.* each.

THE DICKENS FELLOWSHIP

Founded 6th October, 1902.

LIST OF BRANCHES WITH HON. SECRETARIES.

HEADQUARTERS: THE DICKENS HOUSE, 48 DOUGHTY STREET, LONDON, W.C.1.
HOL. 2127.

Hon. Secretary: JOHN GREAVES, A.C.I.S. Hon. Treasurer: W. A. MACGREGOR, F.A.C.C.A.
Hon. Editor of *The Dickensian*: LESLIE C. STAPLES.

UNITED KINGDOM

BATH (No. **81**), 21-3-21.—W. G. PIERCE, 66 Cameley Green, Tiverton-on-Avon.

BIRMINGHAM (No. **19**), 20-11-03.—Miss K. VENABLES, 334 Boldmere Road, Sutton Coldfield, Warks.

BLACKBURN (No. **107**), 11-10-28.—LEO. MASON, 124 Preston New Road.

BLACKPOOL (No. **92**), 16-2-23.—Mrs BRAMMER, 237 Waterloo Road.

BRISTOL AND CLIFTON DICKENS SOCIETY (No. **124**), 1902.—C. W. DARLING, 208 Kellaway Avenue.

BROADSTAIRS (No. **130**), 22-10-37.—Miss G. WATERER, Dickens House, Broadstairs.

CHELTENHAM (No. **63**), 21-10-12.—Mrs. H. HAILING, Bradwell Lodge, Sandford Mill Road.

EASTBOURNE (No. **75**), 9-12-19.—C. G. VAUGHAN, 28 Upperton Gardens.

HULL (No. **34**), 19-10-05.—Mr. & Mrs. HARR, 67a Golf Links Road.

LIVERPOOL (No. **5**), 28-1-03.—Miss J. EDWARDS, 5 Sunny Bank, Bebington Cheshire.

LYTHAM ST. ANNES (No. **135**), 19-9-47.—Miss D. BURTON, Antley, Worsley Road, Andsell.

MANCHESTER (No. **4**), 27-1-03.—Miss M. CORNEY, 46 Alexandra Road South.

NOTTINGHAM (No. **9**), 6-3-03.—Mrs. MARY GILES, The Rectory, Wollaton.

PLYMOUTH (No. **46**), 16-11-07.—Miss VERA COCKS, 31 Mt. Gold Road, Lipson.

PORTSMOUTH (No. **137**), 11-2-03.—Mrs. L. N. G. LYTTON, 104 Lawrence Road, Southsea.

PRESTON (No. **123**), 14-6-33.—Mr. W.D. FERRINS, Linden, Peddars Lane, Ashton on Ribble.

REDDITCH (No. **56**), 1-9-11.—Mrs. TREADGOLD, 33 Ipsley Street.

ROCHESTER (No. **13**), 26-5-03.—Mr. F. H. SEARS, 242 City Way.

SHEFFIELD (No. **23**), 22-4-04.—Mrs. J. MOXON, 50 Grove Avenue, Sheffield, 6.

SHREWSBURY (No. **14**), 12-10-03.—Mrs. H. M. CROCKITT, 24 Ashley Street.

SOUTHEND AND DISTRICT (No. **54**), 11-7-10.—Mrs. MADGE WITHERS, 20 Lime Ave., Leigh-on-Sea.

TEWKESBURY (No. **74**), 27-10-19.—L. G. MARSTON, Rosemead, 34 Barton Road.

WOLVERHAMPTON (No. **136**), 8-11-47.—Mrs. G. CONWAY, 123 Trysall Road.

HOLLAND

HAARLEM (No **142**), 8-12-56.—Mr. NICO ANDRIESSEN, Van Hagendorpstr, 19.

ZWOLLE (No. **144**), 29-9-58.—Miss G. KEYZER Thorbeckegracht, 28.

AUSTRALIA

ADELAIDE (No. **127**), 9-3-36.—Mrs. EVA E. WHITE, 68 Arthur Street, Unley.

BRISBANE (No. **83**), 24-6-21.—THOS. SIMPSON, Albany Creek via Aspley, Queensland.

MELBOURNE (No. **24**), 1-8-04.—Miss McMEEKIN, 2 Clendon Road, Armadale, Victoria, S.E.3.

SYDNEY (N.S.W.) (No. **64**), 19-12-12.—Mrs. L. BANNISTER, 1 The Strand, Rockdale.

NEW ZEALAND

CHRISTCHURCH (No. **117**), 3-10-31.—Miss F... MORLAND, Gray's Road, Upper Fendalton.

DUNEDIN (No. **139**), 1-9-52.—Miss MAY THOM... 44 Leven Street.

WELLINGTON (No. **121**), 5-7-32.—Mrs. D. ... MACLEOD, 601 Evans Bay Parade, Kilbir...

CANADA

EDMONTON (Alberta) (No. **100**), 1-3-27.—... R. CALLENDER, 12711-118 Avenue.

MONTREAL (Que.) (No. **52**), 5-3-09.—Miss... WHITE, 3439 Walkley Avenue.

TORONTO (Ont.) (No. **32**), 9-5-05.—Mrs. E... SCHATZ, 66 Lankin Blvd.

VANCOUVER (B.C.) (No. **84**), 15-9-21.—... H. G. POCOCK, 955 West 10th Avenue.

VICTORIA (B.C.) (No. **113**), 3-1-31.—Mrs. D... WHITE, 86 Kingham Place.

WINNIPEG (Manitoba) (No. **25**), 3-10-04.—... P. S. H. MURPHY, 59 Monck Avenue, Norw...

SOUTH AFRICA

JOHANNESBURG (No. **145**), 18-2-59.—Mr... PLATT, 1 Kilkenny Road, Parkview.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

BLOOMINGTON (Indiana) (No. **140**), 14-10-... Mrs. R. W. HYNMAN, 318 S. Henderson St...

BOSTON (Mass.) (No. **73**), 7-2-19.—Mrs. MA... C. RIPLEY, 141 Englewood Avenue, Brook...

CALIFORNIA PICKWICK CLUB (No. ... 2-4-38.—Miss M. CASSIDY, 3106 West 9th St... Los Angeles.

CHESTER (Pa.) (No. **22**), 4-1-04.—Mrs. J... O'BRIEN, 740 Irvington Road.

CHICAGO (Ill.) (No. **33**), 24-5-05.—Mrs. DAM... W. BRADFORD, 6060 N. Paulina Street.

EVERETT (Wash.) (No. **82**), 7-4-21.—Mrs... MILLESON, 4022 High Street.

HONOLULU (Hawaii) (No. **115**), 3-1-31.—... HELEN TOPHAM, University of Hawaii.

KOKOMO (Ind.) (No. **143**), 5-10-57.—Mrs. E... BROOKING, 317 N. Armstrong Street.

LOS ANGELES (Cal.) (No. **89**), 9-3-22.—... J. H. STEIN, 8953 S. Ruthellen Avenue.

MADISON (Wis.) (No. **103**), 16-11-27.—Mrs... HAMMER, Route 1, Box 7.

MARINETTE (Wis.) (No. **108**), 6-4-29.—... JACK WEST, 2125 Riverside Avenue.

MARYVILLE (Missouri (No. **133**), 3-7-43.—... A. F. HARVEY, 722 North Fillmore St., M... ville, Mo., U.S.A.

NEW YORK CITY (N.Y.) (No. **29**), 1-4-05.—... P. VALENTINE, 160 Columbia Heights, Brook...

OAKLAND St., ALBERTS COLLEGE (No. ... 2-10-54.—Rev. JOSEPH FULTON, P.P. St. Alb... College, 6172 Chabot Road, Oakland 18, C...

PALOS VERDES (Cal.) (No. **129**), 1-10-36.—... A. H. PRIOR, 728 Via Somonte

PHILADELPHIA (Pa.) (No. **41**), 7-2-07.—Mis... HUNTER, 3507 Highland Avenue, Camden, ...

PITTSBURGH (Pa.) (No. **97**), 15-6-25.—... E. STEWART, 4409 Helmar Drive, Monroe...

SEATTLE (Wash.) (No. **126**), 7-2-21.—Mrs. H... NEWMAN, 1222 Summit Apt 403

SIERRA MADRE (Cal.) (No. **60**), 7-2-12.—... TRULA SEWALL, 252½ E. Grand View Avenu...

WORCESTER (Mass.) (No. **119**), 26-1-32.—... EDGAR R. WALKER, 10 Devens Road.

The dates following the Number of each Branch indicates the date on which it was founded.

Full particulars of the Fellowship and Forms of Membership can be obtained from any of the Secretaries.